

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
FAR EAST COMMAND
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SECTION, GENERAL STAFF

CIVIL INTELLIGENCE SECTION

SPECIAL REPORT

SAIONJI-HARADA MEMOIRS

SUPPLEMENT

"PRINCE SAIONJI AND THE LONDON
NAVAL DISARMAMENT TREATY"

6 Mar - 17 June 1930
Vol I

98-GH-23-19

~~RESTRICTED~~

These Memoirs are the private property of the family of the late Baron Kamao Harada and their reproduction in whole or in part, or use thereof in any abridged form, is not authorized except with express written permission of the owner.

DECLASSIFIED
DOD Dir. 5200.9, Sept. 27, 1958
NCWN by 27 date 10-29-68

Master
FEB 1949
48750

Classification of the Saionji-Harada Memoirs
is changed to RESTRICTED, by authority of the
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, GHQ, FEC, by
Angus V. Rutledge, Major, Field Artillery,
1 March, 1947: (see para 16 AR 380-5, dated
6 March, 1946.)

Angus V. Rutledge
ANGUS V. RUTLEDGE
Major, Field Artillery
CIS, GHQ, FEC

R E S T R I C T E D

CONFIDENTIAL

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMY FORCES, PACIFIC
MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SECTION, GENERAL STAFF

CIVIL INTELLIGENCE SECTION

THE SAIONJI - HARADA MEMOIRS

PRINCE SAIONJI AND THE LONDON NAVAL DISARMAMENT TREATY

- Foreword -

This behind-the-scenes account of the political intrigue on the issue of ratifying the London Naval Disarmament Treaty was prepared by Kumao Harada, private secretary to Prince Saionji; this is a separate but integral portion of the SAIONJI-HARADA MEMOIRS. The original manuscript of this portion, the London Naval Disarmament Treaty, comprises 30 chapters, of which chapters 22 to 29 were confiscated by the Kempei-Tai in their raid on Harada's home in Oiso at 6 A.M. on April 15, 1940. This translation was prepared (divided into 11 parts or chapters) from a typed copy of the original manuscript which escaped confiscation by the Kempei-Tai because it has been previously entrusted to the custody of Prince Takamatsu. The manuscript was secured, together with the other portions of the SAIONJI-HARADA MEMOIRS, by Lieutenant Colonel Paul Rusch, Chief, Special Activities Branch, CIS, G-2, from Prince Takamatsu through an intermediary, a high Imperial Household Official.

PAUL RUSCH
Lieut. Colonel, M.I.
Chief, Special Activities Branch
Special Intelligence Division
CIS, G-2

- Table of Contents -

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. World Prestige versus 70 Per Cent	1
2. Admiral Kato Intransigent	21
3. Supreme Command and Constitution	41
4. Rousseauian Saionji	67
5. Imperial Appreciation	92
6-a. Prince Fushimi's Vote	116
6-b. War Councillors Approve	126
7. Privy Council Maneuvers	140
8. Hamaguchi Stands Firm	164
9. Privy Council Approves	188
10. Naval Replenishment and Tax Reduction	219
11. Treaty Ratified -- at a Price	240

The Naval Conference and Prince Saionji

Chapter 1
(6 March 1930)

World Prestige v. 70%

Translated by Lieut. Taichi L. Nishihara

At the time of the opening of the Naval Conference, the press was dealing vigorously with various nations and writing up such things as strategy against hypothetical enemies, etc. The Prince (SAIONJI) said: "From the standpoint of international courtesy, it is not the attitude of a civilized nation to have the press so boldly and openly make comments upon other nations by name. Such things must be guarded against. There should be some caution on this matter from the Ministry of Home Affairs. I believe that it would be proper from the standpoint of international morals.

"In this Naval Conference, I believe that it is logical to desire the delegates plenipotentiary to bring back as good results as possible, but I believe that it is wrong for Navy circles to strongly advocate '70 per cent' and say that the delegate should return if this '70 per cent' is reduced one bit. The Navy must have its standpoint, but looking at it from the wider viewpoint of politics and foreign policy, it cannot hope for complete victory, no matter how strongly it should come out, this is a very difficult matter from the standpoint of national strength.

"The military preparedness of a nation, that is, the ability of that nation to hold out, can be maintained only within the scope allowed by that nation's finances. Even if a reckless plan is made, it is the same as being rendered powerless by a temporary preparedness program.

World Prestige v. 70%

"In the present situation, Japan should come to the fore and have the other powers recognize the fact that Japan is sincerely exerting her efforts for the promotion of international peace. They should say that '60 per cent' would be agreeable in order to make this conference a success. In other words, this matter of Japan leading the conference to a successful close will gradually elevate Japan's future international position. This intention cannot be seen in the picture of Japan advocating strongly that it must have '70 per cent.'

"For instance, BISMARCK firmly believed that Germany would expand in the future and although he was strongly determined to realize upon this belief, he also was aware of the fact that this could not be done immediately because of lack of power. Therefore, BISMARCK paid his respects to a seemingly unnecessary extent to DISRAELI in London and NAPOLEON III in Paris. This was because he was a great statesman and at the same time, a great diplomat.

"More recently, Japan brooked an insult and complied with the advice to return the Liautung Peninsula after the Sino-Japanese War (The 3 Power Intervention) because it wanted the Empire to expand in the future, this action was in the same vein. There are other such examples within the recent history of Japan's foreign policy.

"This would permit Japan to assume a commanding position together with the United States and England. France and Italy are being led. It is very obvious whether the results would be advantageous or not to the nation if this commanding position were lost just because we were

too strong in our demands for '70 per cent', and we found ourselves in a situation not unlike that of France and Italy.

"We should get closer to the United States and England, and I believe that if we do anything in the nature of ill-advised actions and lose all the advantages that we have been enjoying, it will be a very sad thing."

"It is only because Japan is in this commanding position that she is able to come between them and lead the nations in an advantageous manner. Just what advantage would there be in leaving such a position?"

When I visited WAKATSUKI after he had accepted the post of delegate plenipotentiary, he said: "I am sorely puzzled. Navy Minister TAKARABE has said: 'In order to push through Japan's claims - that is, to carry out the '70 per cent' program - it would be bad if this program were looked upon as only the opinion of a specialist in military affairs such as I am, so I would like to have you (WAKATSUKI) say what I wish to say.'"

"Thereupon, I said: 'That would be very difficult. I shall give the matter consideration after consulting with the Foreign Minister and Premier HAMAGUCHI.' "I believe that it is a good thing to return after agreeing to 65% or 67% and that it need not be 70%. This will be exceedingly difficult because the Navy is indiscriminately advocating 70%. I am thinking of going to see the Prince and talking things over before my departure."

Navy Minister TAKARABE said to me: "I am going to make a pilgrimage to Ise and I want to get together with WAKATSUKI in Kyoto and to go with him to see the Prince."

There was a letter from WAKATSUKI which went: "The Navy Minister has said that he wants to go and meet the Prince together with me, but I want to meet the Prince alone. Therefore, please have the Prince announce that he wishes to speak with us one at a time."

Therefore I went to Kyoto and told the Prince about this matter. The Prince said: "It would be better for me that way also. Therefore, when you return, please tell both delegates plenipotentiary that it is my desire to speak with them individually." Therefore I visited both parties, who were in a conference at the official residence of the Navy Minister, and transmitted this message. Finally, WAKATSUKI and TAKAPABE met the Prince separately.

The Prince was worried over the progress of the Disarmament Conference and said: "If SABURI were here, there would be no other like him to add strength to the international conference. It is too bad. If the Navy should put up too much of a clamor and if the responsibility for the disruption of the conference should fall upon Japan, it would be disastrous. Therefore, if such should be the case, then the rest of the delegates should be sent home and WAKATSUKI alone remain to assure a treaty at this conference. I would like that much of an assurance. When I went to the Peace Conference at Paris, the Shantung problem was very bothersome and I was determined to remain behind and settle things after sending the other delegates home."

After hearing this story of the Prince, I recollected what Minister Plenipotentiary SABURI had often told me. This was that when the Shantung problem was brought up, all the delegates were saying that they would leave. There-

upon, Prince SAIONJI gathered everyone and said: "What are you saying? Are you not aware of the fact that of the Shantung problem? Let us not be so silly as to be bound by such a petty problem as that of Shantung and return without taking care of the important problem of the League of Nations. If you are going to return, then, all of you had better return. I shall remain behind alone, so return."

This is a different story, but SABURI also told me: "After the Paris Peace Conference had ended, at the time of the HARA Cabinet, Prince SAIONJI came to the official residence of the Premier just when he was winding up the pending business. Admiral SAITO was going to become the Governor-General of Korea, and by chance a farewell party was being held under the sponsorship of the Premier; and since Prince SAIONJI was also there, he participated. After the usual greetings had been said, everything became quiet; all of a sudden Prince SAIONJI raised his cup and said in a loud voice: 'I make a request for an enlightened administration.' This last was directed at the new governor-general."

The propaganda of the Navy became very vigorous and in a portion of the members of both Houses of the Diet there arose a sentiment to make an announcement that '70%' was the national policy. At that time, Foreign Minister SHIDAHARA said: "If the wording is gentle and it is their desire to do this, then it is unavoidable." I was quite concerned over this matter and believed that it was not very good politically to create such an atmosphere regardless of whether the wording was weak or strong. The Prince heard this and said: "That sort of thing is bad. We must

have the House of Peers or such men as KONOYE and these actions ceased due to his efforts. The Prince saw this and was greatly relieved.

In order to make the Naval Conference a success, the United States decided that they should have an influential man stationed in Tokyo during the conference as the Ambassador and CASTLE was appointed. Some blockheads of the Rightists' Association in Tokyo heard about this and said that Ambassador CASTLE was coming to win Japan over with capital. It was also rumored that they were planning violence and, because the Metropolitan Police Bureau was concerned over this, precautions were taken against it at the time of the landing of the Ambassador at Yokohama. Nothing happened.

After CASTLE had assumed his post, a follower of EHOKI, a ronin as influential as UCHIDA Ryohei visited the Ambassador and questioned him. The Ambassador politely and calmly talked about the mission of the Naval Disarmament Conference and explained that he wanted to exert his efforts toward the promotion of goodwill between the United States and Japan, the peace of the world, and the happiness of mankind. The ronin was deeply impressed by the sincere attitude of the Ambassador and returned. After he returned he praised the character of the new Ambassador, saying: "Ambassador CASTLE is really a great man." When I spoke to the Prince about this matter, he was very happy over it.

Just about the time of the death of Emperor MEIJI, when the Prince was Premier, the United States' Justice TAFT was in Japan to attend the funeral. As to impressions after frequent interviews with him, the Prince said:

World Prestige v. 70%

"At that time, there were many foreigners, including the diplomatic corps, here, but TAFT was indeed a great man and had no peer among them. The new Ambassador of the United States must also be such a man."

When I was in Okitsu on March 2, the Prince said: "I am not too familiar with the situation at the London Conference, but the time is ripe for a change. Just how should our attitude be changed? Just what is going to happen?" When I visited Governor-General SAITO four or five days ago, he was quite concerned over the progress of the Conference and was of the same opinion as the Prince. I had also heard that Count UCHIDA Kosai had vigorously asked Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs YOSHIDA and the Chief of the America-Europe Bureau: "Why didn't Japan lead the United States and England in obtaining the treaty by advocating a 60% ratio from the start? It was a very fine opportunity. It is really a sad story to have the Foreign Ministry led by the Naval General Staff Headquarters as they are today."

I mentioned this to the Prince and he said: "There is no telling how much better for the nation it would be if Governor-General SAITO were exerting his efforts toward making a success of the London Conference rather than administering Korea work for ten years. I agree with what Count UCHIDA has said. I have been thinking in like manner from the beginning."

There had been no official communiques concerning the London Conference for some time and so I went to see the Chief of the Naval General Staff. The Chief of the Naval General Staff was angry and said: "The attitude of the United States is just like that of night-stall operator."

It would be well if they returned with just an agreement on capital ships." However, the Chief of the Naval General Staff admired the character of Ambassador CASTLE.

There are some very understanding men in the Navy, such as the Vice-Minister, Vice-Admirals NOMURA and KOBAYASHI, and Admiral OKADA. However, they have a tendency to be influenced by the strong views of the Naval General Staff Headquarters. Rather than being influenced, it seems as if they cannot suppress it. I have also heard from the mild Vice-Minister, YAMANASHI, that he has warned the Chief of the Naval General Staff to be more prudent when the Chief of the Naval General Staff has acted beyond the scope of his authority.

In order to explain the situation in the Navy concerning the London Conference, it was decided, through the efforts of Premier HAMAGUCHI, that Admiral OKADA would go to Okitsu. It was intended that a frank discussion be held. Since Admiral OKADA would become the mediator in the event that a disagreement should arise, men such as Vice-Minister YOSHIDA were also of the desire that he go to see the Prince at Okitsu. Therefore, Admiral OKADA went to Okitsu and returned, but I heard later that since the talk was all formal, the Prince was not able to say anything.

The Prince said: "I cannot tell why HAMAGUCHI sent him to me." Apparently, since the situation was very delicate, Admiral OKADA had returned without touching on any of the essential points.

The demands of the Naval General Staff Headquarters

World Prestige v. 70%

were still quite strong, but in the middle of March, the compromise plan of the United States was announced. Prior to this, the Naval General Staff Headquarters had sent out propaganda of their own and had done such things as sending telegrams to the foreign press agencies. These were beyond the scope of their authority and everyone was quite concerned over this matter. In the meantime, there had been something in the nature of a statement from the Naval General Staff Headquarters. This statement, which was handed to the Associated Press demanded 70% -- heavy cruisers, and 78,000 tons -- submarines. This simply showed that the Navy was still adhering to two of the three principal features of their demands.

The reason behind this confused statement by the Navy was that the Chief of the Information Section of the Foreign Ministry had asked newspaper reporters: "Wouldn't it be better if matters were settled, even if there were a little reduction in the 70%? In conferences, you have opponents and each must give make concessions and thus obtain a treaty." In retaliation for the remarks of the Foreign Ministry, the Navy made allusive remarks to the effect that: "It would be very troubling to have such propaganda, that is, to have such suggestions made at such a critical time. The Foreign Ministry is being very impudent." The Government also said: "There have been requests from London for instructions, but it is troubling to have the inner circles of the Navy so unsettled."

Therefore there was talk between Foreign Minister SHIDEHARA and the Premier, and as a result, Admiral OKADA was summoned to the Foreign Minister's place. The Foreign Minister asked the Admiral: "Do you think that it would

World Prestige v. 70%

be better to rupture negotiations if there is any divergence from the 70% ratio, or do you think that it would be better to continue them?" Admiral OKADA replied: "We must settle matters even should the ratio become 60% or even 65%." Foreign Minister SHIDEHARA said: "If that is the case, I would like to have you exert your efforts towards patching up the issue with the Navy." Admiral OKADA then said: "I cannot suppress the Chief of the Naval General Staff alone, so I shall make efforts together with Governor-General SAITO." Therefore Admiral OKADA met Governor-General SAITO and asked him to delay returning to his post for a few days, but SAITO replied: "I have stayed in Tokyo too long and I cannot postpone my return any longer." All that Admiral OKADA could do was to obtain the approval of SAITO on this matter of suppressing the Navy; SAITO is said to have agreed and that OKADA should proceed along those lines.

When I met the Chief of the Naval General Staff previously, he said: "This compromise plan of the United States is just like offering us the crumbs and telling us to eat them and it is indeed high-handed. I met the German Ambassador yesterday and he said: 'I have some favorable news for you. I understand that this was heard by the acting Premier of France from the American Naval Attache'. When Delegate WAKATSUKI was in Washington, the United States Government believed that the demands for a ratio of 70% were only intended to make a big noise. However, it is said that the Government is quite troubled because public opinion and the Navy of Japan are still very strong on these demands. Therefore, it might be better if you pushed your demands a little more.'" The Chief of the

Naval General Staff seemed quite happy over the situation. The Chief of the Naval General Staff is a simple-hearted and emotional individual; four or five days later, he invited the German Ambassador, Navy leaders and even Prince Fushimi to the official residence of the Navy Minister, and gave a dinner in honor of the German Ambassador.

I thought that the Prince would be troubled because of the various articles which were appearing in the newspapers so I had been thinking of having the Foreign Minister or Vice-Minister YOSHIDA go and visit the Prince. However, while I was thinking this matter over, Vice-Minister YOSHIDA went to see the Prince on the 18th because he too was worried. The Prince told him: "The later it gets, the more disadvantageous it becomes for Japan from the standpoint of feelings toward the United States and England. I desire that a reply be given so that a treaty will be drawn up as soon as possible."

I went to make a report to the Prince on the 21st and in the report I included the things that the Premier and the Foreign Minister had asked me to say. They were something to the effect that: "We plan to settle the matter, but since domestic matters are such that they demand consideration, we would like to await the cooling of the Naval General Staff Headquarters with the passing of time." To this, the Prince said: "There is no problem at all if they say that they will settle the matter on principles alone. Even when Delegates Plenipotentiary WAKATSUKI and TAKARABE came to my place, they expressed the determination to settle matters. Things are progressing slowly and even if Italy or France should be the

World Prestige v. 70%

direct cause of a rupture or negotiations, we will have to bear the responsibility for it if it should result from delay in the reply of Japan. Such things are very grave matters. I believe that the London Conference is a world-wide and important problem today and that it is very different from such problems as the race problem of some years ago, and also that of the Shantung Peninsula. It is a very important matter.

"Therefore, if it is our principle to settle this problem, then the reply should be made as quickly as possible in order to hasten the settlement. Wouldn't it be all right to consider the remedial measures of the Navy and domestic difficulties as separate problems? It would be disastrous if such a thing as leaving the conference happened. Please make a report of this kind to Premier HAMAGUCHI. It would be desirable for HAMAGUCHI to exert himself in a more determined manner."

The Prince continued: "It is very important that the Imperial Household Minister, the Keeper of the Privy Seal and the Grand Chamberlain should have a good understanding of this problem." Therefore, upon my return from Okitsu, I went to see the Premier and related what the Prince had said. I also told the Premier that the Prince had cautioned on the confused state of the regulations of the Naval General Staff Headquarters.

I met Admiral OKADA at his place on the morning of the 23rd. Admiral OKADA said: "I will settle this matter. It would not be well for the Prince to summon me at this critical time. I must don the mask of the strong elements in order to face this situation. Let us settle it somehow. There will be trouble if it is rushed. I am think-

ing of visiting Fleet Admiral TOGO today." Vice-Minister YOSHIDA visited Count Gombei YAMAMOTO that morning and talked with him. The Chief of the America-Europe Bureau, YOSHIDA, and I had lunch together and YOSHIDA said that Count YAMAMOTO had said: "We must settle this matter by all means. Although they advocate 70%, there are opponents, and they must mutually concede something or it will be no go."

Also, according to a story of Vice-Minister YOSHIDA, the American Ambassador came over to see the Vice-Minister and said: "A request has come from the President of the United States to urge Japan's reply. The message asked him to convey this matter directly to Premier HAMAGUCHI, but I sent a wire to the President saying: 'There is no need for worry as long as Baron SHIDEHARA is Foreign Minister. I believe that it will not be a very good thing for me to meet Premier HAMAGUCHI now. I will put my faith in the character of Foreign Minister SHIDEHARA and wait.'"

I visited Foreign Minister SHIDEHARA at his private residence that evening and told him that I was going to Okitsu that night. The Foreign Minister said: "I am exerting my efforts along that line. The British Ambassador visited me yesterday and said that the British Premier had sent a wire to press for the reply of Premier HAMAGUCHI but I have no anxieties over this. I told British Ambassador: 'Let us settle this matter. Please leave it to me for a while longer. We will not do anything in the nature of intimately collaborating with any nations other than the United States and Great Britain. If we are going to collaborate at all, we will only do so with

your country, so do not be worried.' The British Ambassador seemed quite relieved and asked that I keep this message in some drawer and handed it over to me."

It seems as if the United States and England are placing their trust in Foreign Minister SHIDEHARA and are awaiting development.

The Foreign Minister sent a telegram to WAKATSUKI, phrased in such a way that he could ascertain from the reply whether there were any differences of opinion between WAKATSUKI and TAKARABE. Foreign Minister SHIDEHARA also said that they were still considering counter-proposals.

I reported all the above developments to the Prince on the morning of the 24th. The Prince was greatly relieved and said: "Please give my regards to SHIDEHARA." When I went to see the Prince before, he had said: "If a system could be established, whereby a person like SHIDEHARA could remain permanently in the Foreign Ministry, not necessarily as the Foreign Minister, it would be very good. At any rate, they should decorate him with the Grand Order of the Chrysanthemum."

The leaders of the Navy gathered and were considering counter-proposals, but the Naval General Staff Headquarters, as always, was vigorously adhering to their three great principles and sending out propaganda upon them. However, it was the belief of such men as Vice-Admirals NOMURA and KOBAYASHI, who were thoroughly familiar with international relations, that it was not best to advocate this business of 70% so strongly. Admiral OKADA is also of the same attitude, but since it might make mediation more difficult if negative arguments were pre-

World Prestige v. 70%

sented on the surface, he is exerting his efforts to settle the matter by appearing to advocate 70%.

According to the telegrams coming from WAKATSUKI in reply to the wire sent by Foreign Minister SHIDE-HARA, and also to those coming from TAKARABE, the delegates were generally agreed on most matters at the time that they wired for instructions. However, it was WAKATSUKI's opinion that the American proposal would be final, but TAKARABE thought that there was room to push Japan's view. Moreover, it was believed that the conference would finally reach a decision and there appeared to be considerable dissatisfaction over the opinion of WAKATSUKI that there was nothing to be gained by pushing the matter further.

In the meantime, it seems as if the Navy Ministry at home had made considerable effort to check Delegate TAKARABE. I met the Premier in the afternoon of the 27th of May. The Premier said: "TAKARABE is saying funny things. TAKARABE has said: 'If a five-power conference cannot be held because of France and Italy, then, wouldn't it better to postpone this matter for the present and take it up five or six months from now? If those two nations are to be excluded and just the three nations -- the United States, Great Britain and Japan are to enter into an agreement, then the reply of Japan must be slightly different from the original.' This is very unreasonable and I thinking that it is very odd"

When I had met the Premier previously, on the morning of the same day, the Premier had said: "I did not desire to commit myself to anything so unreasonable and have been waiting. I have waited, and have done everything I could, but if it is impossible, I am determined.

World Prestige v. 70%

I intend to proceed with the courage of my convictions."

Prior to this, when there was discussion of the matter at the gathering of the Supreme War Councillors and the Fleet Admirals, both Fleet Admiral TOGO and Admiral Prince FUSHIMI were strong exponents of the 70% ration. I also heard that Admiral OKADA was present at this meeting and had said: "What we have to fear, is the rupture of negotiations. We must settle this matter." He had earnestly explained that this treaty was necessary for the future of the Empire.

Since the Prince had been worried over the fact that there existed a necessity for the Grand Chamberlain, the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, and the Imperial Household Minister to have a thorough understanding of this problem, I visited the Imperial Household Minister at the Imperial Household Office and the Grand Chamberlain at the Office of the Grand Chamberlain. The Grand Chamberlain said: "We must settle this matter somehow. I agree with the Prince. If I were not in my present position, I would go and explain matters to KATO and the rest, but I cannot do anything about it in my present position. The right-hand man of the Emperor -- the Chief of the Naval General Staff -- must keep silent and be more circumspect. It is very regrettable to assume such an attitude as to call upon the people for their support, and then attempt to push through his own proposal. I believe that it is the idea of an ordinary officer to contend that the ratio must be 70%. The Chief of the Naval General Staff must be a man who can utilize his men according to the strength allotted to him, and if he is allotted only 50% or 60%, he must utilize them within those limits. It is very amus-

ing to have him say that is must be 70%, or that that young officers of today are different from those of yesterday. I believe that the Chief of the Naval General Staff can do as he pleases by leading the young officers in a righteous manner. I believe that there is no change even in the matter of spiritual outlook. It may be that KATO is stubborn and too emotional. This is the way that I look at it." I asked the Grand Chamberlain to be cautious on those points. He understood matters more thoroughly than I had expected and I returned greatly relieved.

I visited the Foreign Minister at his place that evening and it seemed as if he were greatly worried.

I had been planning on going to Okitsu to report to the Prince that a decision had been reached whereby the reply would be made within a day or two. However, there was a phone call from NAKAGAWA from Okitsu which went:

"The Prince has suddenly come down with a cold, his fever is high and his pulse is rapid. He must refuse all interviews..." I had asked the railway to take a letter to the Prince for me and I thought that it might not be good for him to read this while he was ill, so I had Hachiro (SAIONJI) come to the phone and I asked him to keep the letter for me and to tell the Prince to be at ease because the Foreign Minister is very determined, etc. I decided that it would be better for me to remain in Tokyo and gave up going to Okitsu.

I left on the night of the 29th and reached Okitsu on the morning of the 30th. I went to the Zagyoso (SAIONJI's villa) and matters did not appear too favorable. Therefore, I spoke with Hachiro (SAIONJI) and other members

of the family in the study. A person who was attending the Prince came and said that if HARADA should come, he had some business with me and that he wanted to see me. At that time, the Prince's temperature was 39 degrees Centigrade and he was in a critical condition. Everyone thought that he should not meet anyone nor listen to anything. However, I heard that every time he had been delirious, he had spoken such words as 'disarmament', 'Italy' and 'France'. Since it was the desire of Hachiro for me to go and see the Prince and set his mind at ease by explaining matters simply, I went to see him. I said to him: "You have met with misfortune, haven't you." The Prince replied: "Yes, I have. It is very troublesome." Then, the Prince told the nurses and the other attendants beside him to leave and asked me: "How is the matter of disarmament progressing?" I told the Prince of the determination of the Premier, the fact that the Foreign Minister had finished drafting the telegraphic reply and that the Government was of strong intentions. I also told the Prince: "The time for Japan to express her desire to participate in a tri-partite treaty will come within a day or two. Everything will be settled, so rest assured that it will." The Prince appeared very happy and said that he was relieved over the situation. I thought that it might aggravate his condition if I stayed even a little longer, so I paid my respects and left. Before I left, I told the Prince that the Grand Chamberlain was well aware of everything.

I returned that evening, met the Grand Chamberlain, and reported to him on the general situation. The Grand Chamberlain told me that he had gone to see Admiral

Prince FUSHIMI, who had been an intimate friend of his for a long period of time, four or five days ago. He had told His Highness that members of the Imperial Household must take a more cautious attitude in such matters as the expression of strong arguments at the executive council. The Grand Chamberlain had also told Prince FUSHIMI that this treaty was an important issue in a world-wide sense, and that since the rupture of negotiations would have a great influence upon Japan, she must now give her whole-hearted support to the establishment of this treaty. When this was explained to the Prince (FUSHIMI), His Highness thought that his own narrow-mindedness was a very regrettable thing and said that he would be more prudent in the future.

I believe that this was possible because the Grand Chamberlain had been on intimate terms with His Highness for a long time as a naval man; this is the reason why he was able to speak so frankly and so sincerely.

The Grand Chamberlain had said that he would go and speak with Admiral TOGO after the telegraphic instructions had been dispatched, but the Prince (SAIONJI) had been quite apprehensive, and since I was quite anxious over the attitude of the Grand Chamberlain, I went to see the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal the following morning. I told the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal everything and also spoke to him of the points on which the Prince was anxious; he was of the same opinion.

On April 1, the Premier presented the disarmament proposal to the Cabinet Council, effected a settlement in the morning and by 3:00 p.m. had returned after submitting the matter to the Throne. The Premier had told the Chief

World Prestige v. 70%

of the Naval General Staff and Admiral OKADA prior to the Cabinet Council: "From the standpoint of national policy, this treaty must be made. Although it may be unsatisfactory for national defense, from the standpoint of the Chief of the Naval General Staff, it is something which must be accepted from the over all outlook, and there must be further consideration on this point." The Chief of the Naval General Staff had been urged by various elements to maintain this 70% ration, and as a result this unexpected impasse developed. It is not the wish of the Chief of the Naval General Staff to throw everything into the maelstrom of political warfare. Therefore he assumed a cautious attitude, made it seem as if it would be inevitable if that was the policy of the Government, and returned.

The Naval Conference and Prince Saionji

Chapter 2

Admiral Kato Intransigent

Translated by Lieut. Taichi L. Nishihara

After returning from his audience with the Emperor the Foreign Minister sent telegraphic instructions to London. I had been at the official residence of the Premier at that time and had obtained this information. I immediately called Hachiro (SAIONJI) and said: "After gaining the decision of the Cabinet, instructions were sent by wire to London. Since this message would serve to relieve the Prince, please convey it to him." Hachiro immediately went to the bedside of the Prince and told the Prince: "HARADA just called and said that the reply to the Disarmament Conference was telegraphed to London after passing the Cabinet Council and after having been reported to the Throne." The Prince appeared quite pleased and said: "That is a great success on the part of HAMAGUCHI." When this was conveyed to the Premier by Secretary HASHIMOTO, it is said that the Premier shed tears of happiness. (This was on the 3rd of April, and since his illness had become quite serious, the Prince seemed to be suffering considerably.)

After the decision of the Cabinet Council, in other words, after the reply had been wired to London, there was great concern over the agitation within Navy circles and also as to what attitude TAKARABE would take. Vice-Minister YOSHIDA asked me to exert my efforts so that a wire would be sent from Admiral OKADA to Navy Minister TAKARABE to calm him. I wanted to know better how to make Admiral OKADA understand, and also to penetrate more deeply into

Admiral Kato Intransigent

the situation within Navy circles, so I thought that I should meet Vice-Admiral OSUMI who was a good friend of mine. I informed Vice-Minister YOSHIDA of this and it was decided that Vice-Minister YOSHIDA, Vice-Admiral OSUMI and KONOYE would meet secretly at my home.

Since circumstances were unfavorable that night, we met at my home from 3:00 p.m. of the 2nd. When we discussed the attitude in Naval circles at that time it was said that the Chief of the Naval General Staff had made a direct appeal to the Throne yesterday. The original proposal was very unreasonable and statements such as: 'It is not tolerable in the light of the great responsibilities of national defense,' were included in such a way so as to attack the weak-kneed foreign policy of the Government. Vice-Admiral OSUMI had contended that the use of such unreasonable words was inadvisable and had had all such expressions deleted.

The Chief of the Naval General Staff, KATO, is a very understanding man once matters are explained, and the contents of the appeal to the Throne were amicably settled and the direct appeal to the Throne was safely concluded. The advisers close to the Emperor were also concerned over the contents of this appeal to the Throne. The Navy had been advocating that the minimum ratio for national defense was 70% and since this could not be obtained they had declared that the basis of national defense policy must be changed. This was an appeal only in the sense that it had to be made and was quite meaningless. It is the duty of the Chief of the Naval General Staff to plan his strategy properly in accordance

Admiral Kato Intransigent

with any change in the strength of his forces, and there was no need to make an appeal to the Throne on such a matter. However, because of the circumstances, such a meaningless appeal was made.

It seemed that the Naval General Staff was pacified through the efforts of such men as Vice-Admirals NOMURA and KOBAYASHI and Admiral OKADA who were working with TAKARABE. However, Vice-Chief of Staff SUETSUGU would not quiet down; he had attended a meeting of the Showa Club (House of Peers) without the permission of the Navy Ministry and had strongly expressed his dissatisfaction on matters which he should not have touched upon. On the previous day he had gone to the Premier (also the Acting Navy Minister) and said: "It was very indiscreet of me to have circulated mimeographed matter to the United Press. This action was unknown to the Chief of the Naval General Staff and the Navy Vice-Minister and it was strictly an arbitrary action on my part. This is a very unpardonable action and there is nothing to do but be penitent and place myself at your disposal. I should do my penance at my home, but due to the pressure of business, I must aid the Chief of Staff. I shall be at the General Staff Headquarters, but I shall be waiting for action from you." To this the Premier had replied that he would take action after investigating the matter.

It was the day after this that SUETSUGU had attended the meeting of the Showa Club and, saying that he was going to explain the results of disarmament, had strongly expressed his views on matters which should have

Admiral Kato Intransigent

been kept confidential. This action was quite disturbing to the Premier. When I visited him, he was quite angry and said: "This is very inconvenient from the standpoint of the maintenance of military discipline. Also as the action of an individual, it is quite impudent. I must deal with it somehow."

I visited Vice-Minister YAMANASHI at the Navy Ministry. I heard from the Vice-Minister and the Admiral that Admiral OKADA had been there and had repeatedly admonished Vice-Chief of Staff SUETSUGU.

At the general meeting of the Chief Delegates Plenipotentiary at London on April 4, our delegate announced the attitude of our Empire in regard to the arrangements in accordance with the telegraphic instructions sent to him. Britain and the United States rejoiced over the fact that we participated in the arrangements, and grateful and friendly telegrams were sent to Foreign Minister SHIDEHARA from STIMSON and MacDONALD. I had been thinking of reporting this to the Prince, but his illness was still quite serious and I was unable to make any report. It was said that the date of signing would be the 22nd and Delegate TAKARABE was, of course, waiting for this date.

In Japan the Naval General Staff was still not satisfied and was still clamoring. I believe that it was just about the 7th or 8th of April. I happened to visit the Navy Ministry and Vice-Admirals NOMURA and KOBAYASHI were saying that the Chief of Staff had not even been to the mess hall and for me to go and see what was the matter. I went to the room of the

Admiral Kato Intransigent

Chief of Staff. He asked after the health of the Prince and I gave the usual greetings. After that I said: "You may be rather dissatisfied, but it is fine that the conference has somewhat settled down." To this the Chief of Staff said: "It seems as if we have been roped up by England and the United States, and it is as if we have been thrown into a prison. Well, we shall be gone, but you will have to bear the consequences soon."

The Chief of Staff continued: "Because there is no such thing as a fixed national policy in Japan, the national defense policy wavers and this is indeed troublesome. In the future, the leading men from the Government and from the people should gather and a national defense conference should be held. It should discuss just what would constitute obstacles to the expansion of Japan into the Far East and especially into China. A general estimate should be made of just what would be best in order to avoid these obstacles or to make them as few as possible. We must be prepared with sufficient strength in order to constitute a threat to our opponents. "What worried me most this time was the action of the advisers close to the Throne. The fact that such men as the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal seemed to be presenting their own opinions was also a source of great concern."

I thought that the fact that the Grand Chamberlain had explained matters to His Highness, Admiral Prince FUSHIMI, and also to the Chief of the Naval General Staff had only inflamed the issue. However, I changed the subject and said: "According to the newspapers,

Admiral Kato Intransigent

you do not wish to make political capital of this problem. You stated that you must always be careful of becoming involved in the maelstroms of political disputes, and that you had solemnly repelled temptations. This news you gave the press was very favorable."

The Chief of Staff replied: "Groups from the various political parties have come and said that they wished to see me, etc., but I have refused them all and have not met them."

Subsequent to this, the papers had opined this and that, but it seemed as if it was not too important. However, according to someone, there seemed to have been people spreading the groundless rumor: "Before the Premier presented the reply to the Throne, the Chief of the Naval General Staff wanted to present a direct appeal to the Throne, but the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal obstructed this."

Since the Diet session was approaching, there were signs that this problem would change to one of a political nature. Moreover, if this matter were referred to the Privy Council, it would try to obstruct its effectuation by saying that it would be better if it did not gain the Imperial sanction. The Privy Council was quite dissatisfied with the terms of the treaty which the Chief of Staff would not recognize from the standpoint of national defense. It might also say that this would be an encroachment on the powers of the supreme command. Even further, it might convene a meeting of the Supreme War Councillors to judge as always whether the terms of the treaty were

Admiral Kato Intransigent

adequate for national defense. Rumors state that after this it would reply to the inquiry.

When I met Admiral OKADA, he said: "If things such as a meeting of the Supreme War Councillors or an Imperial Inquiry of the Board of Field Marshals and Fleet Admirals before the Imperial sanction is given are being planned, I shall exert all my efforts so that such things will come after the Imperial sanction. Therefore I cannot leave Tokyo until the return of the Navy Minister to Japan."

I had heard various rumors concerning the matter of the powers of the supreme command and also of the responsible Cabinet. It was said that there had been heated discussions within the Diet on the interpretation of these two, as embodied in Articles XI and XII of the Imperial Constitution. It seemed that they were emphasizing the point of who was to bear the responsibilities of national defense, and were using it as material for an attack on the Cabinet. Therefore I thought that I would go to the University, meet with Professor MINOBE, and listen to the views of a scholar on the subject. Fortunately the Professor had about two free hours that afternoon, so I invited him to the separate residence of SUMITOMO at noon. OKABE, Chief of the European and American Bureau HOKKA, and Chief of the Asia Bureau ARITA, were also there. We gained some clarification on the points in the constitution under discussion.

The Government intended to adopt the theory of Professor MINOBE, and Premier HAMAGUCHI was also going to recognize it. However, the professor very lightly

Admiral Kato Intransigent

stated: "The Naval General Staff is part of the supreme headquarters and aids the supreme authority of the Emperor. It would be well for the Government to regard the views of the Naval General Staff simply as reference material, they should not be held to be conclusive."

If this matter were treated as bluntly as Professor MINOBE suggested, the result would not be very pleasant sentimentally. Therefore the idea was that efforts should be expended so that the atmosphere would not become tense. It was to be made plain that the views of the military would be fully considered because there should be some relation with the Army.

The opening of the Diet gradually drew near and it was said that certain groups within the House of Peers and the Privy Council, which fostered anti-Governmental tendencies, would use this issue as a platform for attacking the administration.

I consulted with Dr. KATSUNUMA and Hachiro (SAICHOJI) on the condition of the Prince, and I thought that if I were to go and make my report about the beginning of May the Prince would have recovered sufficiently so that it would be reasonably safe. Therefore I was watching everything quite carefully until that time, but there was a phone call from Okitsu on the morning of the 23rd, and I was told that I was wanted at Okitsu at a comparatively early opportunity although it was not too important.

Therefore I left on the night of the 24th and reached Okitsu on the morning of the 25th. After consulting with Dr. MIURA and Hachiro, it was decided

Admiral Kato Intransigent

that I should not speak more than 15 minutes at a time. When I went to the Prince's room, he said: "This is not a very urgent matter, but I have been confined to bed for a long time. Therefore, I am like a student of a primary school who has been absent from school due to illness and cannot coordinate what was being taught and what is now being taught. Such a student would be thought of as being quite stupid and it would not do for me to be in a similar situation, so I called you to tell me the incidents that happened while I was in bed, and I also want to say a few words."

Therefore I gave him a general report, and the Prince asked: "What was the attitude of the United States and Great Britain in regard to the attitude of Japan at the London Conference. It would be fine if it was favorable, but just what was it?" When I replied that the results were quite satisfactory, the Prince was quite happy. He also said: "Please be very careful of the situation within the House of Peers and the Privy Council in regard to this problem."

The Prince continued: "If you meet Premier HIRAGUCHI, tell him: 'Your thoughts have been revealed here as before, and the fact that Japan was able to participate satisfactorily in the making of this treaty at the Naval Conference is all due to your efforts; SAIGONJI offers his heartiest congratulations.' I am also indebted to the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, and the Imperial Household Minister and the Grand Chamberlain for their concern over my illness. Please convey my most grateful thanks to them."

I was also asked by the Prince: "Didn't the men

CONFIDENTIAL

Admiral Kato Intransigent

around Count YAMAMOTO do any political maneuvering while I was ill?" I informed the Prince as to the general progress of matters since his illness. I told him that the Privy Council was planning to overthrow the Cabinet, using this problem. I also mentioned that the anti-Government faction of the House of Peers was trying to use the disarmament problem as a method of overthrowing the Cabinet. I even mentioned the fact that KIBAYASHI, Sukehide and the likes of the SATSUMA clique, were attempting to organize some advisory organ, including the three men, Count YAMAMOTO, HIRANUMA, Kiichiro and Prince ICHIJU, court officials, and have it aid the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal in replying to the Throne in case of a change in the administration, that is, after the death of the Prince. To this, the Prince replied that it was an intolerable story.

Concerning the problems of the House of Peers and the Privy Council, the Chief of the Naval General Staff announced to the public after the direct appeal to the Throne: "The American proposal will not meet the great responsibilities of national defense. We are opposed to it." This has inflamed the situation greatly and, generally speaking, this so-called American proposal of the Naval General Staff is not the American proposal at all, but the plan on which Japan and the United States had compromised. However, if it was not said that the American proposal itself was crammed down the throat of Japan, the statement would not have very great force as material for an attack on the Government, so it was announced to the public by the Naval General Staff that it was the American proposal.

Admiral Kato Intransigent

I believe that the disarmament treaty will finally obtain Imperial sanction, however, the Government will be attacked, the announcement of the Chief of the Naval General Staff being used as material for movements to overthrow the Cabinet. The disharmony between the Cabinet and the Naval General Staff Headquarters will be stressed; that is, although it has been said that the views of the Naval General Staff Headquarters have been given full consideration by the Cabinet, just what is to be done about the announcement of the Chief of the Naval General Staff? That is the way in which the Cabinet will be attacked.

Although the Premier has said that there is no need to reply to this inquiry because it does not go beyond the inner circles, there is nothing so troublesome as this announcement. Although it may be that both the Chief and the Vice-Chief of the Naval General Staff will have to resign, Navy Minister TAKAMBE will also be forced to resign at the same time. In this way a portion of the Cabinet will be disposed of and the Cabinet overthrown. Such is the plan of the opposition parties and the schemers.

From this point of view, the actions of Navy Minister TAKAMBE have real important meaning. This is the point on which such right-thinking men in the Navy as Admiral OKADA and Vice-Minister YAMASAKI are quite concerned. Therefore Captain KOGA, the senior adjutant, was sent to Harbin to make a report on the present political situation. Captain KOGA transmitted the views of Admiral OKADA to Navy Minister TAKAMBE. These were: "The Navy Minister should remain silent until the delegates have

Admiral Kato Intransigent

returned. I believe that the men of the 1st and 2nd Reserves and in other units will question the actions of the Minister and press for his resignation. At such a time the Minister must remain firm, and since there was considerable conviction shown by him in signing the treaty he must not give any sign of going back on his action but must maintain a firm attitude. When the Chief of the Naval General Staff resigns, it will be less troublesome if the Privy Council is asked to decide whether there shall be an Imperial inquiry of the Board of Field Marshals and Fleet Admirals, or whether it would be sufficient for national defense for the Supreme War Councillors to be convened." The foregoing was the view of Admiral OKADA and it was sent to show the Navy Minister the necessity for taking careful action so that there would not be any change within the Cabinet. When I reported this to the Prince, he said: "That is so. It is also necessary to have someone outside of Navy circles say the same things."

Previously, the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, YOSHIDA, had been quite worried, and it seemed as if he was having difficulties in selecting an envoy to TAKARABE. I discussed the matter with him and he consulted with Count KIBAYASHI, Sukehide, the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, and Count YAMAMOTO, Gonbei. As a result, they decided to have MATSUKATA, Otohiko go as an individual for the sake of TAKARABE, but MATSUKATA hesitated to accept for some reason and declined the offer. Finally, it was decided that KIBAYASHI, Aisuke would go to meet TAKARABE as a private friend and also that Parliamentary Vice-Minister YAMAGUCHI would go part of

Admiral Kato Intransigent

the way.

Since KABAYAMA, Aisuke was formerly on rather intimate terms with Baron HIRANUMA, great fear was expressed that this matter might become known to the HIRANUMA faction, and that this would be very disadvantageous to the Government. However, the fact that the Prince had made a complete recovery altered the situation entirely. It was believed that KABAYAMA, Aisuke would consider TAKAMIBE first and would not do such a thing as to lend his friendship for the schemes of HIRANUMA and the like. Therefore, the decision to asking KABAYAMA was maintained. I spoke of the above matter to the Prince and returned from Okitsu.

The Diet very severely and vigorously attacked the Premier and the Foreign Minister with the differences between the Government and the Naval General Staff Headquarters as the main point of attack. On the morning of April 3, I visited the Chief of the Naval General Staff at the Navy Ministry, but the Chief of Staff still seemed to be quite dissatisfied over the Disarmament Conference. He also believed that SHIDENARA's speech on foreign policy was quite challenging and was aimed at the Naval General Staff Headquarters.

He said: "Before the Government made the reply, they should have listened to our views on the matter. However, when I attempted to explain matters at the Cabinet Councils, I was prevented from doing so. They also said this and that behind our backs and just two hours before they wired the reply, they informed me of what they were going to do. This appears to show disregard for the Naval General Staff Headquarters. If

Admiral Kato Intransigent

they had allowed me to have my say and then had given me to understand that there was no alternative, after considering the matter from various points of view, it would have been all right. However, they did not even do that; the way that the reply was sent shows disregard for the Naval General Staff and is equivalent to ignoring the powers of the supreme command. It is unbearable to have the matter of national defense decided in such a manner."

He was rather critical of the fact that the powers of the supreme command and the powers of organization, (of Army and Navy) in short, the powers of administration, were in opposition. He continued: "A Cabinet formed from the political parties will not save the situation. We must have a Cabinet formed from able and wise men close to the Emperor. There is no alternative but to proceed with a system of absolute monarchism."

I then said: "That is an argument which shows that you are not aware of the state of affairs. Although it may be possible to assemble such men for a Cabinet of able and wise statesmen, there will be none to follow it. There is no other method but to proceed on a system of constitutional government and to improve the quality of the parties. There is no other possible way but to await the awakening of the people. The announcement you made after making the direct appeal to the Throne was very disastrous, and it was regrettable that there was no one to caution you, because your strong arguments were advocated in too challenging a manner."

On my return I met Vice-Admirals NOMURA and KOBAYASHI and told them this story. I also inquired into

Admiral Kato Intransigent

the various aspects of the situation. I invited the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, YOSHIDA, and the two Admirals to supper at the Kinsui and we discussed various matters there. I heard that the Seiyukai had circulated the story that the Grand Chamberlain had secretly lined up with the Cabinet, and when the Chief of the Naval General Staff had attempted to present a direct appeal to the Throne before the Premier presented his reply, he had intercepted it. After investigating this story, the Seiyukai had threatened to expose the indiscretion of the advisers close to the Throne. It seemed as if the Seiyukai were eyeing the men having connections with the Imperial Household, and the Privy Council was even more critical.

This was propaganda for the so-called schemers and when I met the Grand Chamberlain two or three days ago, I related the story to him. The Grand Chamberlain said: "I received an inquiry on that story from the Kempeitai. There is absolutely no truth in the story that I obstructed the efforts for a direct appeal to the Throne by the Chief of the Naval General Staff before the reply was presented to the Throne. First of all, I have no connections whatever with direct appeals to the Throne, which are under the jurisdiction of the Chief Aide-de-Camp. No time could be taken by the Emperor, because of various affairs of state; hence the matter was unavoidably delayed until after the reply was presented to the Throne."

On the other hand, according to the Premier, a very earnest and intimate friend came and brought a message from Count KIYOMI. "The message was: 'When

Admiral Kato Intransigent

the reply was presented to the Throne, the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal was beside the Emperor. At that time the Emperor is said to have asked whether or not the Chief of the Naval General Staff was in agreement with the reply. The Premier is said to have replied that the Chief of the Naval General Staff was in agreement.

"I heard this confidentially from someone, but I have quashed it, so with that in mind, I not tell many people about it."

It seems that this was told in a very sincere sort of way, but that it is all pure fabrication. The Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal was not present when the Premier made his reply to the Throne. Moreover, it was not true that the Emperor asked whether or not the Chief of the Naval General Staff was in agreement. The Premier was wondering as to what an odd sort of message it was, but I believe that it was a message inspired by some schemer.

According to Vice-Admiral NOMURA: "There are some extremists among the members of the First and Second Reserves, and in order to threaten TAKARIBI, they are saying that they will go to Harbin, or that they will kill him if things are in error. It would be very favorable if someone like Governor-General SAITO of Korea should come to Tokyo in order to calm down the officers of admiral rank within the First and Second Reserves, etc." According to the newspapers of a day ago, Governor-General SAITO very clearly expressed satisfaction with the Disarmament Conference, and also thought that the actions of the Naval General Staff Headquarters were very unpleasant.

Admiral Kato Intransigent

Under the circumstances, the problem of whether or not to appoint someone to administer the affairs of the War Minister is entwined with the problem of whether a civil official would be acceptable.

There are many proposals being aired in the Diet at present. Among them are: strong demands for the attendance of the War Minister, who is hospitalized; a close investigation of the relationship between the powers of the supreme command and those of the Government in affairs of state, or of encroachment upon the powers of the supreme command; the signing of the treaty at the Disarmament Conference in relation to Article X; also other types of problems related to the Disarmament Conference and the powers of the supreme command were brought up to be used as material for the overthrow of the Cabinet. Moreover, the actions of TAKIUE in regard to the Disarmament problem are looked on anxiously, and if War Minister UGAKI should take a view opposing that of the other members of the Cabinet in respect to the interpretation of Articles XI and XII of the Constitution, then the Army and the Navy, in short, the military, will attack the Cabinet in coordination. If these two (War and Navy Ministers) should unite and resign, then it will be impossible for the Cabinet to remain in office.

Not only is General UGAKI the War Minister, but he is also the most important member of the Cabinet and politically, the actions of UGAKI have a great effect on the Cabinet. Because of this, when the Premier was attacked in the Diet and elsewhere on the point of ignoring the powers of the supreme command at the Dis-

Admiral Kato Intransigent

armament Conference, the assistance of the State Ministers, or the complexities of Articles XI and XII, he maneuvered so that they would not touch on these subjects, although it was against his true intention, and had them consider the advisability of explicitly dividing the constitutional powers of the supreme command and those over the organization of the Army and the Navy. Regardless of this, he is avoiding entrance into these matters and is saying: "The action related to the Disarmament Conference was taken with the assistance of the State Ministers and I shall bear the responsibility. However, I desire to avoid all constitutional arguments upon it."

The reason he did this was that the Cabinet would meet a useless end because of the unusual circumstances during this session affecting the military members, that is, War Minister UGAKI and Navy Minister TAKARABE. Therefore, the reason for the existence of the Cabinet until this date would be dispelled and it is the difficult position of the Premier to have the Diet concluded safely without touching on these problems.

A part of the Privy Councillors have taken advantage of the fact that some Navy men have a misunderstanding of the constitution. Because the Privy Council is the highest decisive authority on the interpretation of the constitution, the Emperor must accept the interpretation of the Privy Council as the correct one in case of an Imperial inquiry on the constitutional aspects of a problem. Therefore, should there be a difference in the views of the Privy Council and the Cabinet, the Emperor must of course accept the interpretation

Admiral Kato Intransigent

given by the Privy Council and, accordingly, the Cabinet must resign. Moreover, there are some people that go around propagandizing to the highest leaders of the Navy that the Cabinet will certainly be ruined by this problem. There are some schemers who are thinking of having War Minister UGAKI also resign, and there are various maneuvers being carried out involving the matter of the Disarmament Conference. In the end, political capital was made of this problem of the Disarmament Conference.

I left on the night of April 3, and went to Okitsu. I reached Okitsu on the morning of the 4th and met the Prince. I informed the Prince on various matters and he was surprised at the great number of obstinate men. The Prince said: "The Privy Council will cause no trouble if the advisors close to the Throne such as the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal and the Grand Chamberlain stand firm. We must do something to settle this situation while I am still living, for if matters remain as they are, it will cause great worry."

Governor-General SAITO of Korea has told newspapermen in Korea: "I believe that the acts of our nation in participating in the Disarmament Conference and in giving our approval to the Treaty which was recognized as indispensable from an international standpoint, were not an encroachment upon the powers of the supreme command. I also believe that to make political capital of this matter is very unpleasant. Isn't it wrong for the military to provoke the problem further by bringing up matters such as disregard for an essential organ of our nation and questioning the constitutionality of

Admiral Kato Intransigent

this treaty, which the Government signed as a proper agreement? In view of the contents of the Treaty, I believe that it will not cause any serious deficiency in national defense until 1936. There is no limit to national defense, but in view of the figures of the Treaty, it will be quite evident even to a novice that there will be no deficiencies in national defense. Therefore the military must make national defense secure in the future, according to the measures decided upon." It is only proper that Governor-General SAITO expressed such a view and I believe that it had considerable effect on the Navy.

According to the arrangements of the Diet, Parliamentary Vice-Minister YABUKI is to go part way to welcome Admiral TAKARABE.

This is a rather different subject, but when Railways Minister EGI went to see Count ITO four or five days ago, Count ITO said: "The fact that a Treaty was concluded at the Disarmament Conference is a very favorable thing for our nation, but it is a very troublesome thing to hear that the Chief of the Naval General Staff is opposed to it." It was thought that he said this because this matter would indirectly become a difficult problem in the Privy Council in the future and that he wanted to forestall any such thing.

The Naval Conference And Prince Saionji

Chapter 3

Supreme Command and Constitution

Translated by Lieut. Hakuzo Nitta

It is a fact that the Chief of the Naval General Staff is busily engaged with the Privy Councillors. He has said: "The Government's behavior in disregarding the powers of the supreme command is a violation of the spirit of the Constitution. I want the Privy Council to seek the advice of the Emperor concerning that question." Because he has complained thus, the truth of the matter is that it is very unpleasant and unendurable despite the settled air assumed by the Naval General Staff.

Navy Minister TAKARABE finally departed from Harbin and entered Korea just as the long spring was passing and it seemed that he intended to meet the Governor General of Korea about the 19th. Captain NAKAMURA, who had gone as a delegate with plenipotentiary powers, had returned to Tokyo two or three days previously and had given out publicity somewhat beneficial to the Naval General Staff. During his trip home I saw some articles wherein he had given to reporters stories of a cynical nature which indicated various reasons for his various dissatisfaction.

According to what I heard, even those things which had been disclosed in the strictest confidence to Japan by America at the private meeting between MATSUDAIRA and REED had leaked out to the Jiji Shimpō of Tokyo. From what I heard from various sources, it is Captain NAKAMURA who has purposely allowed the exposure of the secrets in order to make the meeting of MATSUDAIRA and

Supreme Command and Constitution

REED end in failure. It seemed that it was the deliberate plan of the Naval General Staff that NAKAMURA should come back earlier than the Navy Minister so that he could make some convenient report.

From the first the Prince persistently said: "The present attitude of the Naval General Staff is fanatical and very inexcusable." Even when I went to see him on April 15th, after the meeting had been concluded, the same subject came up. He said: "Even from the standpoint of maintaining military discipline, it will be very troublesome if something is not done."

Therefore Premier HAMAGUCHI said: "I would like to have Foreign Minister SHIDEHARA speak to the Prince at length on the details of military disarmament. Instead of my speaking with him first, please have him meet the Foreign Minister first." He said: "However, I would like to have the Prince meet Plenipotentiary Admiral TAKARABE." When I spoke to the Prince about this, he said: "Since the state of my health remains very good, it would not be impossible for me to meet them. And I would prefer to meet him myself; however, if I see him, I will likewise have to meet Plenipotentiary TAKARABE who is due to come back in the near future. Thinking about it from various angles, it may invite speculation and be more unpleasant if I meet the Foreign Minister first. Therefore it may be best if you inform the Premier, the Foreign Minister, and even the Plenipotentiary, that I will not meet them until my health is definitely improved. After you have given it due thought, please do something about it." So I returned from Okitsu and informed both the Premier and the Foreign

Supreme Command and Constitution

Minister: "You must give up the idea of seeing him for a while."

It seemed that the person who went to meet Plenipotentiary TAKARABE had thoroughly oriented him and since then nothing has appeared in the papers over which one should be solicitous.

Recalling the events which took place in the Diet session, there were various problems, but, in short, only the problems of military disarmament and unemployment were the targets of attacks. So, just as we had feared from the first, such things as the Chief of the Naval General Staff's statement, and the actions of the Naval General Staff, were finally being used spectacularly as tools for political disputes. Because KONOYE had to depart for China on the evening of May 13, I suddenly called Admiral OKADA and KONOYE on the eve of the 8th. While we dined together I had OKADA talk directly to KONOYE concerning the circumstances affecting the Naval General Staff's attitude on the Disarmament Conference. Since things might happen in the future, I had OKADA give KONOYE a full understanding of the present situation.

The problem of the powers of the supreme command took up a special session of the Diet and was the focus of debate in both Houses, but no solution had been reached when the session was adjourned. It was decided the problem would be left for later consideration. The Government, anticipating that the question of the responsibility for abiding by the conclusion of the London Treaty would be the source of a cross-examination by the opposition party and also by the House of Peers, had

Supreme Command and Constitution

responsible officials study plans for coping with the Diet and had them concentrate upon the answers to be given on this question. As a result the following conclusions were reached:

"At the time of the conclusion of the Treaty, there was nothing unconstitutional about the measures taken by the Government. The conclusion of the Treaty was an absolute duty of the nation. This Treaty was a settlement of the question of the amount of naval personnel strength. Although there may have been some divergence of opinion in the Naval General Staff at the time of the settlement of instructions in response to requests, the final decisive power rests with the Government. Therefore, it is clear that on this point, it was not a violation of the powers of the supreme command. The basic policy in defense of this conclusion is:

1. The opinion of the Naval General Staff was given the greatest respect and consideration.
2. The responsibility of the Diet for natural defense will be assumed by the Government.
3. There is no necessity for replying to questions regarding the Government's handling of instructions in response to request or regarding constitutionality."

From the time the curtain went up on the Diet interpellation session, verbal warfare was continued until the end of the session in the main legislative body, the budget board, and various other committees, by INUKAI, HATOYAMA, UCHIDA, MAEDA, UEHARA and YAMAZAKI in the House of Representatives; and by SHIMIZU, Kichiro; IKEDA, Nagayasu; INOUE, Kiyozumi; HANAI, Takuzo; UZAWA, Somei;

Supreme Command and Constitution

ISHIWATA, Toshikazu; SAKAMOTO, Shuntoku and ICHIJO, Sanetaka in the House of Peers. In scrutinizing the progress of the discussion, the main points of debate were:

- 1.- At the time the government dispatched its instructions to Plenipotentiary WAKATSUKI, it disregarded the opinion of the Naval General Staff, which is responsible for national defense tactics; the Naval General Staff states that it cannot promise security of defense regardless of what is done about the amount of manpower as set forth in the draft plans. Premier HAMAGUCHI and Foreign Minister SHIDEHARA definitely state that it will be secure, but is that the truth? (President INUKAI's question at the April 25th session of the House of Representatives.)
- 2.- By breaking away from the minimum established by the Naval General Staff and by saying that the Treaty minimum is safe for national defense, the Government indicates that there may be two minimums. Didn't Railroad Minister ECI say at the 45th session of the Diet that there were no two minimums? (UCHIDA, Shinya's question at the April 27th session of the House of Representatives.)
- 3.- Do the paragraphs on the powers of the supreme command and on organization in the 11th and 12th Articles of the Constitution fall within the scope of the State Ministers' responsibility in their advisory capacity? (MAYEDA's question at the April 30th session of the House of Represen-

Supreme Command and Constitution

tatives)

- 4.- The differences between the Cabinet and the Naval General Staff cannot be solved by legal discussion; therefore, it is necessary to seek a political solution in order to carry out the future administration of the nation. How does the Premier propose to cope with this problem? (SHIMIZU's question at the May 6th session of the House of Peers)
- 5.- Just because there are divergences of opinion concerning the interpretation of the Constitution among scholars, it is impossible for an advocate of constitutional government to say that he cannot make a clear-cut explanation. What is your opinion? (Baron IKEDA's question at the May 7th session of the House of Peers)
- 6.- Does the Premier possess all the qualifications of a Navy Minister in order to supervise Naval affairs as an emergency Navy Minister? (HANAI's question at the May 9th session of the House of Peers)
- 7.- If the view is taken that the responsibility of advising the Emperor as concerns the powers of the supreme command is beyond the scope of the 55th Article of the Constitution and if, as is rumored, they will not answer questions concerning those powers, I will put my question in another form: Do the State Ministers say that they are not responsible for advising the Emperor on national defense? (Asked by HANAI at the same session)
- 8.- If it is said that the powers of the supreme command are wielded by the combined conference of the

Supreme Command and Constitution

Navy Ministry and the Naval General Staff, will it be satisfactory to the Naval General Staff is the Navy Ministry alone alters the minimum requirements for national defense? (Prince ICHIJO's question at the May 11th session of the 4th Sub-committee of the Budget Board of the House of Peers)

On these questions Premier HAMAGUCHI moved ahead, as far as possible, according to his first established policy of non-explanation. Considering that the content of the debate in the Diet would have important influence in the Privy Council and elsewhere at a later date, he dodged the main issues and did not commit himself.

Once a discussion of the Constitution is entered upon, the method of procedure usually becomes a discussion of the interpretation of the Constitution and it does not warrant an explanation, HAMAGUCHI said, and thus he diverted the brunt of the attack. On the very last day, that is the 13th, HAMAGUCHI answered the interpellations of SHIMIZU and HANAI at the plenary session of the Diet by especially changing the statement: "I took into consideration the opinion of the Naval General Staff" to: "The opinion of the Naval General Staff, which embraces the Navy group, was heard, and the Government, which embraces both the War and Navy Ministers, made the decision." It was because of this that the Government was finally able to reach a solution of the interpretation problems relative to the 11th and 12th Articles, which had been approached with a very thoroughly prepared attitude. That is, the Premier had clearly made an unspoken counter-

Supreme Command and Constitution

proposal regarding the tactical responsibility and the responsibilities of organization and administration of the military. The reason that he deliberately dodged giving a very clear answer on this point was that Dr. HANAI had clearly stated at the plenary session that nothing more was involved than the Government's giving consideration to a certain delicate relationship of certain elements. It is needless to say that the "certain elements" pointed to the military group, and it was seen that this was well, as the return of the Navy Minister from Korea would on numerous occasions extend the discussion, and would be a scourge to plague the Government.

On the morning of May 19th Plenipotentiary TAKARABE returned to Tokyo and when I went to welcome him, it looked as if he were receiving quite an enthusiastic welcome. There may have been present some who were requested to be there by political factions, but it was a welcome quite beyond my expectations. I thought that it might be an indication of the merry welcome Plenipotentiary WAKATSUKI would receive on his return from Korea. My heart was full when I thought of the lonely scene at the Shinagawa Station when I met Plenipotentiary KOBAYASHI unexpectedly on his return from accomplishing meritorious services at the signing of the Portsmouth Treaty, which formed the foundation for the world position which Japan now holds. The deep dissatisfaction of the populace toward Plenipotentiary KOBAYASHI became transformed later into praise of a brilliant and epoch-making piece of diplomacy for the future of the nation, when later historians pointed

Supreme Command and Constitution

out its true significance. Reminiscing about this I cannot help but sympathize with KOBAYASHI for the half-hearted welcome he was tendered because the people at that time were not able to keep cool-headed.

Immediately on his return from Korea, Plenipotentiary TAKARABE called at the official residence of the Premier. I met TAKARABE about 3:00 P.M. at the official residence of the Navy Minister before he and the Chief of the Naval General Staff had met. The Plenipotentiary offered his sympathies for the Prince's illness during his absence and felicitations that his recovery at this time bode well for the whole nation. When he asked what the Prince's opinion toward the Naval Conference was, I said: "The Prince expresses his heart-felt felicitations and congratulations on your consistent efforts to reach a naval agreement. Especially, because you were different from the other plenipotentiaries in that you represented the military side, and in spite of that fact that you took a difficult stand, the country should rejoice greatly because you met the situation properly. He rejoices from the bottom of his heart that you were able to conclude this treaty." The Plenipotentiary replied: "If I talked of various matters, it would take too long. We argued when we had clashes of opinion, but since it was an argument between gentlemen, there was no one among my colleagues who did anything distasteful, and there was nothing at all which would mar our prestige. I cannot help but admire greatly the efforts of WAKATSUKI as the senior plenipotentiary. The first thing I should do would be put forth my best efforts to gain the rectifi-

Supreme Command and Constitution

cation of the entire agreement we formulated. Secondly I would like to patch up the differences within the Naval circle. At the same time, as there seems to be something of a misunderstanding among the Premier, the Foreign Minister and the Naval General Staff, I think that it is my important responsibility to expend my effort toward clearing up this skepticism. Please convey my best wishes to the Prince."

Proposing to leave for Okitsu that evening I met the Premier and was thinking about meeting Admiral OKADA. When I met the Premier, I also had a leisurely talk and dinner with TAKARABE. After talking with him about various things, it seemed that his determination was quite set. In regard to his relation with the Chief of the Naval General Staff, he said: "I think I would like to persuade him somehow, because Chief of the Naval General Staff KATO and I are on especially intimate terms. I firmly believe that I can persuade him. Please leave it to me."

At that time I asked the Premier: "Whatever happened to the question of the Vice-Minister of the Navy?" He replied: "YAMANASHI has exerted himself very greatly this time and I am very grateful to him. It can be seen that YAMANASHI's request for resignation at this time was to obtain the reconsideration of the Vice-Chief of the Naval General Staff through his resignation, and also to force the resignation of the Chief of the Naval General Staff. Because his health is greatly weakened, the Vice-Minister of the Navy may rest for the time being."

Proposing to leave that evening, I phoned Admiral

Supreme Command and Constitution

OKADA and he said: "Will you wait two or three days? It would be more convenient if you went after two or three days instead of tonight.." I called Okitsu on the phone and told them of the extension of time. Because the Prince did not seem to be in an especial hurry, I decided to depart for Okitsu on the evening of the 22nd. On the 21st I visited the plenipotentiary at the official residence of the Navy Minister and asked him about developments since our previous meeting. He replied: "The Chief of the Naval General Staff and I talked it over fully. Regarding personnel strength, as related to Naval disarmament and to the progress of the formation of the treaty, they seem to understand that nothing more could have been said, and there seems to be no regret as far as that point is concerned, because I had exerted my best efforts." He continued: "In connection with the problem of the powers of the supreme command, namely the disregard of the Naval General Staff, they say that the fact that the powers of the supreme command were infringed upon is not to be taken lightly and they seem very firm. I think that this is very disturbing and I am of the opinion that they have been incited by HIRANUMA and his group in the Privy Council. To have been made a tool in a political dispute is very aggravating. I am very cautious at this time because I think it is not good to quarrel, but if a quarrel is unavoidable I intend to act with considerable determination.... Because it is necessary to prepare the groundwork at the right places beforehand, I am cognizant of this and am doing something about it now."

When I called at Admiral OKADA's home to ask about

Supreme Command and Constitution

the situation that evening, he said: "Chief of the Naval General Staff KATO is amenable on other things, but he is obdurate on the issue of supreme command powers and will not listen." He continued: "KATO may have to quit eventually. In the first place, the acts which can be said to constitute a violation of the powers of the supreme command are, the disregard of the Chief of the Naval General Staff's opinion and the conclusion of an agreement concerning national defense without the concurrence of the Chief of the Naval General Staff. If these are what the dissatisfaction arises from, there will be no takers for the job of plenipotentiary in the future. In short, the Navy is represented by the Navy Minister as the State Minister and the Naval General Staff is contained within the Navy. Thus, although there may be some problems between the Navy Minister and the Naval General Staff, problems between the Naval General Staff and the Cabinet should not arise directly. It would be very disturbing if we could not enter into any international agreements because of the Chief of the Naval Staff's opposition. He has been deceived by those so-called plotters who are planning to prevent the Emperor's ratification by reasoning that a violation of the powers of the supreme command has occurred. This is indeed very troublesome, but I think that eventually he will have to resign. However, I think that I would like to try to persuade him just once more." He continued: "There are those who urge me to say that a conference of the Supreme War Council should be convened to state that as things stand, the national defense is insecure and that the situation is

Supreme Command and Constitution

extremely unsafe. However, I declared: 'It is absolutely impossible for me to say such a thing.' As for the Navy, we will never discard the three great principles which we proclaimed at the London Conference. The present agreement is unsatisfactory; however, since it has been concluded, I think that there is no other way but to make the best of it. At any rate, as Vice-Minister YAMANASHI worked very hard and seems very fatigued, he will be given a rest and will, I think, be replaced by Vice-Admiral KOBAYASHI. I would like to decide after one more day, when I can meet both KATO and TAKARABE and after I have looked over the situation."

When I returned home that evening and heard about the situation, I learned that the Chief of the Naval General Staff is very amenable when Vice-Chief SUETSUGU is absent, but becomes intractable again when SUETSUGU appears. While KATO, in effect, is being maneuvered by SUETSUGU, it also appears that the person who is manipulating SUETSUGU is HIRANUMA, with his group in the Privy Council. This problem will not be escaped without some commotion, but I think that the situation will settle down if KATO will resign.

MORI of the Seiyukai phoned and said: "I would like to meet you so shall we meet somewhere late tonight?" However, thinking that I could not stand the late hours, I called at the headquarters of the Seiyukai in the evening. MORI said: "When the Chief of the Naval General Staff decided to make a direct appeal to the Emperor, before the Premier went to seek the Emperor's advice, the Chief Aid-de-Camp to the Emperor went to the Grand Chamberlain, who in turn conferred with

Supreme Command and Constitution

the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal. When the latter called in HARADA, to listen to the opinion of the Prince, the days went by until the Chief of the Naval General Staff's appeal was delayed and it was the Premier who received the instructions from the Emperor. The direct appeal which should have come before the Premier's statement was deliberately delayed by sending it through so many hands, and the passing of time was awaited. Comments are that the obstruction of the Grand Chamberlain and the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal was very insulting; just what do you know about it?" I replied: "I know nothing about it at all. In the first place a direct appeal to the Emperor is handled by the Chief Aide-de-Camp. It has nothing to do with the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal and the Grand Chamberlain. And furthermore, the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal never did ask me about any such things. These occupations are entirely fabricated lies. The reason that the direct appeal was not received was, I hear, the occupation of the Emperor with other matters. However, it is not for me to say anything about that. I know nothing about it." MORI then said: "It is rumored that there will be an Imperial message in connection with that. If this were to happen, it would be very bad. At any rate I desired to meet you today to inquire about this point."

When I met Admiral OKADA I spoke to him of my meeting with MORI for his information. The Privy Council seemed to be maneuvering, with the violation of the supreme command powers as its theme, but it was not yet known just how it was going to come out with

Supreme Command and Constitution

concrete actions.

Admiral OKADA said: "It surely seems that the Chief of the Naval General Staff is out of his head. He seems to believe what is said by various people about the leftist inclinations of the Government, and other such non-existent things. Because he seems to be acting on impulses alone, I think it best that he resign. It is just that there are among the younger officers those who fairly worship KATO and that those in the first and second reserve who do not understand various things are acting foolishly. It would be disturbing to have them start a foolish movement concerning KATO's resignation which would damage KATO's prestige. Just as I would not like the Navy to be hurt, neither would I desire KATO to be hurt. When I think that I would like to be finished with this with as little commotion as possible, I become greatly concerned. Furthermore, having heard Chief of the Naval General Staff KATO's opinion, Admiral Prince FUSHIMI and Fleet Admiral TOGO seem to agree more or less with him. It would be difficult to overlook their opinions. It is necessary that I speak to him again to have him look the situation straight in the face." It seems that Admiral OKADA and Vice-Admiral SAKONSHI visited KATO and bent considerable efforts toward that end.

When I met Admiral TAKARABE later, he said: "In regard to the suicide of Commander KUSAKARI, KATO said in effect, that, 'he was really a good man. At last, a human sacrifice has been offered in opposition to military reduction.' When he said this I (TAKARABE) said: 'There is no harm in your saying this to me, but if

Supreme Command and Constitution

you had said this to the public or to anyone else, your character would have been doubted. You must be more careful.' He was very angry when I told him this."

(The truth of the matter was that Commander KUSAKARI was subject to abnormal periods due to nervous breakdowns.) When I met Admiral OKADA, he said: "From what is being said by news reporters, it seems that the premises of KATO, Vice-Chief of Naval General Staff SUETSUGU, and Fleet Admiral TOGO, are being watched by Government detectives, visitors are challenged, and the movements of the three persons are being observed. These things will greatly stimulate these three persons' opposition to the Government." Thinking this very strange, I tried to substantiate it by phoning the Superintendent of Metropolitan Police. He replied: "Such reports are entirely unfounded." Therefore I immediately informed Admiral OKADA of this fact. I think that such reports were engineered by some group to increase more and more the opposition of the three to the Government.

I recall that the group of reporters frequenting the Navy Ministry, that is, the Kuroseki group, was entirely sympathetic to the Chief of the Naval General Staff. When I went to see the Navy Minister, I was asked various questions by these reporters, but I had always replied: "I don't know anything", and had declined to comment. From the manner in which they questioned me, it seemed that the anti-TAKARABE feeling was fairly strong.

On the one hand there seemed to be a movement which wanted a meeting of the War Council convened and

Supreme Command and Constitution

wanted Admiral OKADA to say that: "the national defense is insecure", but Admiral OKADA said: "I can never engage in such nonsense. Didn't the Navy abandon its claim on the three great principles? At any rate there is no other way but to plan the security of national defense within the allowed scope, because the Treaty already has been decided upon. We must obtain in some manner the terms which we were unable to realize. In general, the Naval General Staff is not independent of the Government. Having acted first through the Navy Minister, are they at odds with the Government; the Naval General Staff cannot negotiate directly with the outside nor can they confront the outside. Since Navy Minister TAKARABE seems to be doing all that is possible with cautious determination, there is no need to be concerned."

To both the Navy Minister and Admiral OKADA, I said: "Since the Chief of the Naval General Staff has expressed his desire to resign, will it not be better, for the future, if we do not prolong the process but bring it to a speedy close. If we stall around too much, I think that we may be confronted with various malicious scandals or some nonsensical trivialities. Therefore, I feel that it will be better all around if you do it simply." They replied: "That may be so, however, it would not be too good if we move too fast...."

On May 23rd I went to Okitsu and reported to the Prince on the general situation. That is, a remarkable man must be secured as successor to the Chief of the Naval General Staff. The Vice-Minister of the Navy is resigning because his health is poor and because of the

Supreme Command and Constitution

outward reason that he was responsible for the confusion in the situation during his absence. The truth of the matter is that in his resignation is included the wish to obtain the reconsideration of the Vice-Chief of the Naval General Staff, who was the instigator of the disorder. I heard from both the Premier and Admiral OKADA that he had arrived at that decision after much deliberation.

The Prince said that whatever may be said, the situation is grave, and: "if the Navy goes ahead with determination, the situation should settle down. It would be all right if the Navy changed its personnel to cope with the Privy Council. Both the Premier and Foreign Minister SHIDEHARA must be well aware of the situation as it exists within the Privy Council. However, it is necessary that they listen to the arguments of the constitutional scholars and study them carefully. It may be that there will be those in the Privy Council who will raise constitutional issues. Is the Government aware of that point?" I replied: "I shall tell the Premier and the Foreign Minister to exercise caution."

The following editorial appeared in the morning edition of the Asahi on May 25th under the daring title: "Lightening the Citizen's Burden rather than Powers of Supreme Command."

The Naval General Staff is maintaining that it was an infringement on the powers of the supreme command when the Government decided the issue of military strength without the concurrence of the military. They claim that in all such cases in the future their concurrence must be obtained. In saying that there has been an infringement on the powers of the supreme command, just what organ is infringing on the powers? Are they maintaining that the State Minister who

Supreme Command and Constitution

advises on the power of military organization is violating the powers of the supreme command which are advised upon by the Naval General Staff? Is it possible for one power to be violating another power? Or is it being held that various State Ministers of the responsible Cabinet independently wield the powers of military organization, and that only the Naval General Staff and the General Staff Headquarters exercise the powers of the supreme command? Even if the military were to say in this case that the decision upon military strength is the responsibility of the State Ministers, it is as if they were impeaching the Government's attitude of disregarding the consent of the military. However, the truth is that just as it is clearly stated in the announcement by the Chief of the Naval General Staff, the military had early made known its disapproval and had opposed the Government because it had concluded the Treaty in spite of this disapproval. And that constituted not the disregard of consent, but the disregard of the disapproval. That is, it is nothing but a difference in the military's opinion of the effect of disapproval in relation to the power to conclude a treaty. Even if there exists a necessity for conferring with a headquarter's organ in regard to the power of determining the number of regular Army men and the organization of the Army, as contained in Article 13 of the Constitution, there is nothing in the Articles of the Constitution which can be interpreted to say that it goes as far as giving the headquarter's organ any say, or regarding the right of pushing through any claims of opposition, to the power of concluding a treaty.

If, because of the disapproval of the military, the conclusion of the London Treaty had not been realized, the fate of any treaty could clearly be decided by the Naval General Staff. The Chief of the Naval General Staff, who does not have any responsibility whatever to the citizens of the State, can control military disarmament by saying that he will not be responsible for the national defense. If he were able to control the State Ministers' advisory capacity in regard to the power of concluding a treaty, he might long to advise on the ratification of treaties on matters other than national defense and tactics, which are related to military affairs. This is nothing less than a demand by the supreme right of veto as it concerns the conclusion of treaties with foreign powers, and as it concerns internal affairs which affect the budget. Therefore the case involves the violation, by the Naval General Staff, of the power to conclude a treaty, and the intent to violate the Government's authority to appoint a budget authorization committee.

Since the Emperor was visiting Shizuoka on May 28th, and I would have to stay at Okitsu for three or

Supreme Command and Constitution

four days, I intended to call on the Navy Minister, the Premier and also Admiral OKADA. However, I was not able to see Admiral OKADA because he was down with a cold. When I met the Navy Minister on the 25th, after he had appeared before the Emperor to report for the first time since his return from Korea, he said: "I have just returned from the Emperor's audience. When he said, in a powerful voice full of determination: 'Thank you for your trouble', I was overwhelmed. Both Admiral TOGO and Prince FUSHIMI from the military group are coming out very strongly. This is because KATO has gone out almost every day and planted his own viewpoints tenaciously to that end; it is very disturbing. Things seem to be getting better, but it will be troublesome if the Prince does not show concern over such matters. There are instances when it is very disturbing to have a member of the Imperial Household who attains a responsible and fairly high office engage in various debates. Therefore I am of the opinion that it would be for the best to have a member of the Imperial Household in some honorary post so as not to become embroiled in disputes. I am concerned that it may cause many difficulties if the Imperial Family engages in various debates." Furthermore he continued: "I will informally listen in on the gathering of the Supreme War Council and maybe lunch with them, and after I talk with them, I would like to take care of the disposition of the Chief and Vice-Chief of the Naval General Staff. This may take place earlier than expected."

Just on the eve of the 27th, the Foreign Minister

Supreme Command and Constitution

had invited some members of the House of Peers to whom he was indebted for their assistance during the Diet session, and I was also invited, to the Yamaguchi. When the party was over at approximately 9:00 o'clock, I called at the official residence of the Premier as I had promised. I talked with him until 10:00 o'clock and he said: "Since the Navy Minister was here just before you, I am thinking of having the War Councillors meet unofficially. I would like to have them discuss the powers of the supreme command to the degree that it was discussed in the Diet and not have them go into it too deeply. It is desirable to have them decide that the military strength had been suggested with the consent of the Chief of the Naval General Staff and the Navy Minister. The fact that there was agreement between Admiral OKADA, the Vice-Minister of the Navy, and the Chief of the Naval General Staff is thoroughly recognized by the nation. What was said in the agreement by the Chief of the Naval General Staff was: "I agree if it is viewed from the standpoint of the general situation. I think that there will be trouble from the standpoint of strategy. From the standpoint of tactics and strategy I disagree, but in the circumstances it is inevitable, so I agree." We parted after he had said: "Please convey my regards to the Prince." According to Baron IKEDA, a member of the House of Peers, he stated in the story which appeared in the newspapers the previous day regarding his discussion of the powers of the supreme command with War Minister UGAKI: "War Minister UGAKI was not upon every-

Supreme Command and Constitution

thing since it happened during his illness, but it is a fact that the Chief of the Naval General Staff had not given his consent nor was he able to agree with the Treaty." It was written up ostentatiously in the various papers. The Cabinet had ascertained that it was propaganda for some ulterior motive, and that in fact there was nothing to it. That was also clearly concurred in by the Vice-Minister of War.

According to Railway Minister EGI: "This is extremely confidential but Privy Councillor TOMII came to me and said: 'It is troubling to have such presumption on the part of the military as appears at this time. The Government must be cautious because there are those in the Privy Council who will use abusive words. Extreme caution must be exercised for the cause of constitutional government. You must change the personnel at any cost.'" When I (EGI) said: 'Naturally we are of that intention', he seemed very much relieved and departed. It would not do to let this leak out to other people, but please mention it to the Prince."

Four or five days ago, OKAZAKI, Kunisuke came to my place and said: "Just as happened in the Manchurian Incident, this Cabinet may eventually totter." Furthermore, he referred to the sad plight of the financial world and criticized the actions of the Cabinet severely before he departed. ICHIMIYA, Fusajiro came late one night and asked: "Is it true that the Naval General Staff is going to strike, as I hear from some quarters?" Because I thought that there would be no end to answering these various stories of unknown origin, I listened without comment and asked Vice-Admiral

Supreme Command and Constitution

HOMURA who replied: "There seems to be no such thing. Something will come of it." Later when I met Vice-Admiral KOBAYASHI, he said: "This is something I have sought to tell you for some time. When we met at the Navy Minister's official residence, we discussed the first plan and that which had originated at London (preparatory meeting before the requested instructions) The Naval General Staff had said: "We don't agree with the first plan. If it cannot be helped because of the general situation, we would like to have about three conditions appended to the second plan," and it was decided on after that. At that time the Chief of the Naval General Staff did not say anything, that is, he did not oppose it. If he had any opposition to it, why did he not speak then? It isn't very fair to complain about it later when he had kept quiet then. In saying just what was meant, the Chief of the Naval General Staff should have spoken as a rule to the Navy Minister as soon as he returned. Because he did not speak at that time, everything is confused. Why don't we approach Chief of the Naval General Staff KATO through MATSUDA who is very intimate with him?" Vice-Admiral KOBAYASHI had approached me with this proposal. When I spoke to the Premier about this, he said: "No, the Navy Minister was taking advantage of the circumstances at the time of his return. However, the Chief of the Naval General Staff says: 'I was just overlooking it at the time. I never did approve it.'" Because of such talks, I do not have to speak to MATSUDA, in spite of the story Vice-Minister KOBAYASHI kindly told me.

When I went to Okitsu early on the morning of the

Supreme Command and Constitution

28th, I told the Prince everything. The Prince said: "It is best that the whole business be concluded as quickly as possible."

When I called the Foreign Office on the phone from Okitsu on business, Chief of the European and American Bureau HORITA said to me: "It seems that the meeting of the Fleet Admirals and the War Councillors called by the Navy Minister ended about three or four hours ago. I don't know the particulars, but...." I thought that they must have called off the luncheon party which had been planned. I called Admiral OKADA to ask him about the situation, and he said: "The talks at the meeting were successfully concluded, and it looks as if everything will proceed as planned." Previously, Plenipotentiary WAKATSUKI had said: "When you get back, please tell the Prince we want to talk to him about the situation at the conference as it actually was." Since it was decided that Chief of the Information Bureau SAITO was to come to Okitsu, I called him on the phone to proceed to Okitsu immediately.

On the evening of the 28th, at about 7:30, Grand Chamberlain SUZUKI, who had accompanied the Emperor on his tour of Shizuoka, came at the Emperor's wish with fruits and candy as if it were just a personal visit. After he had spoken to the Prince about an hour concerning the opinions of those in the Imperial Circle about military reduction, the Prince said: "It seems to be going well with SUZUKI working hard on it and understanding it" He rejoiced greatly. Furthermore, SAIONJI continued: "It would be disturbing if you told this to KONOYE. The reason I want only you to have

Supreme Command and Constitution

heard it is that Plenipotentiary TAKARABE came before his departure to me and asked that a council in the Imperial presence be held in order to decide on the Empire's claims and in order to unify public opinion. At that time the Grand Chamberlain's courier came and told me that he had given his consent, and I said: 'That will never do. What will you do by burning the bridge of foreign affairs? It would cause an imperative necessity. Please tell him and Imperial Household Minister MAKINO that Prince SAIONJI is absolutely opposed to it.' They finally dropped the idea because of my opposition. I thought it very disturbing that the Grand Chamberlain had agreed to any such thing. SUZUKI said: 'Because of your objection at that time, we did not hold a council in the Imperial presence. Reflecting back now, it might have invited an alarming result if we had held it. Because of your advice, I did the wise thing.' The Grand Chamberlain was filled with gratefulness. He seems to understand this situation pretty well. Please do not speak of this to any other person. It would be disturbing to have SUZUKI's judgment questioned. These things should never be discussed with anyone."

On the night of the 30th, SAITO came; on the following morning, he met the Prince for about an hour and reported to him on the proceedings at the Naval Conference. The Prince was greatly enjoyed. SAITO and I departed for Tokyo after noon and returned to Tokyo on the 31st. When I met Admiral OKADA on the morning of June 1st, he said: "I previously told you that everything was going ahead as expected, but the situation has

Supreme Command and Constitution

become more complex because the Naval General Staff and the Navy Minister may be of a mind to replace the Chief of the Naval General Staff, but it looks like this may be delayed and the outlook is that it will inevitably cause greater commotion than had been supposed." I phoned the Prince in a previously agreed code and said: "The decision has been made, but its execution may be delayed somewhat, and according to Admiral OKADA it will not be possible to avoid some commotion."

The Naval Conference and Prince Saionji

Chapter 4

Rousseauin Saionji

Translated by Miss Chito Isonaga

Subsequently, there has been a considerable number, who are entertaining hopes for a council in the presence of His Majesty in connection with the Naval Disarmament Treaty issue. Admiral YAMAMOTO seems to be one of them. In reference to the above, Admiral OKADA is said to have opposed the idea saying: "A Council in the presence of His Majesty is called only when the opinions of the Minister and the head of the department concur. When there is a conflict of opinion between the two, how will His Majesty make his decision? We must refrain from vainly submitting a matter to His Majesty's judgment and causing the young Majesty to worry."

Soon afterward the Navy Minister suffered a stomach ailment and finally had to take to his bed. The fact that he could not report to work at the Navy Ministry caused all sorts of rumors to be born. The newspapers published all kinds of articles. They even went as far as to say that the Navy Minister was going to resign.

Thereupon, I (HARADA) called on the Navy Minister at his sick bed and he stated: "I have become very fixed in my beliefs. This is due to the fact that when I held an informal meeting of the Supreme War Councillors at my official residence, inviting to this get-together twelve or thirteen 1st and 2nd reserve Navy Admirals, I found out, upon discussing various matters, that everyone grasped the situation and, being favorably impressed by the particulars of the Naval Conference, acknowledged my efforts. For example, Admiral TOCHIUCHI remarked

Rousseauan Saionji

joyously on the prevailing congenial atmosphere saying:

'Such happy circle as this is something that cannot be found in the Army.'

"Admiral YAMAYA commented: 'Former Navy men, and members of Naval clubs such as Yoyokai and Kaikokai, place one in an awkward position by endeavoring to express various strong opinions at the meetings of the Generals and Admirals but even if they are permitted to do so I am certain that nothing serious will develop. Difficulties might arise if they are not allowed to do as they please, therefore it may be a sound idea to let them go ahead. As long as I understand the situation, everything is safe. Don't let their outbursts of opinion bother you as I will take care of them.' Upon this, the papers declared that a very strong resolution was passed at the meeting of the 1st and 2nd Reservists, but stated that although their verbal expression of intentions was strong, in reality it was not too severe."

According to the story told by the Navy Minister, he later met with the Chief of the Naval General Staff and very boldly argued with him on various matters. He also severely reprimanded as well as cautioned the Chief of the Naval General Staff on his unfavorable actions up to now. It is said that as a result KATO was somewhat repentant. Soon after this, the newspapers reported that the Naval General Staff Headquarters had forwarded an immense program proposal to the Navy Ministry. Thereupon, news became wide-spread that the Navy Minister had been hammered and squeezed from both sides and might have to resign his office, together with the Chief of the Naval

Rousseauan Saionji

General Staff. As luck would have it, the Navy Minister was still confined to his bed, therefore he did not attend the Cabinet meeting of the 6th. But on the same afternoon the Navy Minister called a meeting at his official residence and, despite his illness, attended the meeting in order to discuss unavoidable personnel matters.

Such being the case, I am convinced that the Navy Minister looked lightly upon the Cabinet meeting of the morning but figured that the Navy Ministry's personnel conference of the afternoon was of vital importance, therefore warranted his presence in spite of his illness. But from a third person's viewpoint, the fact that the Navy Minister attended the meeting held at his official residence although he did not attend the Cabinet meeting was a matter of some significance. As a result, the Navy Minister found himself in adverse circumstances and again rumors began to fly that the Navy Minister was resigning.

When I went to see the Prime Minister at the Ministry he said that he had sent Chief Secretary SUZUKI to inquire after the health of the Navy Minister at his private home but found him out. As a result, even Premier HAMAGUCHI began to doubt the Navy Minister. Upon this, the Premier requested that I find out the actual circumstances. I calculated that it would be silly for me to pursue the Navy Minister, therefore I started off for Admiral OKADA's residence.

Upon questioning the Admiral on the situation he said: "Everything is progressing far better than anticipated; there is nothing to worry about." If there is anything of importance, Admiral OKADA should

Fousseauan Saionji

know of it. Furthermore, if the Admiral says so, there is nothing to be worried about. The reason why the public raises a commotion is that it does not know the facts. As I thought it would be unwise to participate in the uproar, I retraced my steps and met with Premier HAMAGUCHI at his residence and discussed the above matter with him. At this, the Premier seemed quite relieved.

That evening I was invited over to the home of the Vice-Minister of the Imperial Household, and there I met with KONOYE, OKABE, and KIDO. Late that night, as KONOYE and I walked out of the Vice-Minister's residence, he (KONOYE) said: "MISOGUCHI came over not long ago and told me: 'As Minister of War UGAKI's illness is prolonged, he is finally going to resign. Due to this, I have been ordered to go to Korea to call on his successor, General MINAMI, for preliminary consultation.'"

At that time I thought that even if he were resigning due to his illness, it was a very serious matter both for General UGAKI and for the present political situation. Thereupon, I contemplated checking with the Premier whether he knew of the existing situation and called on him the following day at his official residence. I found out that he was aware of nothing. The Premier said: "I shall be very much put out if General UGAKI should quit on me now. Please figure out a way to prevent this."

As a matter of fact, in spite of this, one cannot say anything until he actually meets with General UGAKI and questions him. Therefore I called on the General at the Army Hospital. General UGAKI did not tell me definitely that he was going to resign but he remarked:

Rousseauan Saionji

"The compilation of the new budget is very difficult. As for the state of the financial world, the Finance Minister is very unaccommodating, therefore I am at a loss as to what to do. When an opportune moment arises, I would like to surrender my office. It will take three or four months for me to recover from my ailment, therefore I would like to resign..."

The foregoing was the gist of (General UGAKI's) conversation. I had heard such talk once before and had been taken aback then and concerned over the matter, as the Prince (SAIONJI) had previously thought seriously of General UGAKI's speech and action, but since this was the second time such talk had arisen, I commented:

"There may be many opportunities to resign but no matter what the other problems may be, it will be very inconvenient should you resign before the Imperial sanction is given to the Naval Disarmament Treaty."

As I was thinking of leaving, the Aide-de-Camp announced that the Navy Minister had come to inquire after the health of General UGAKI, therefore I waited until they met. On his way home, I greeted the Navy Minister at the front door and got into the same automobile with him and went as far as his official residence. Our conversation, which began in the automobile, lasted for an hour after we reached the Minister's official residence, and from this I was given a general knowledge of what had occurred since I last talked to him. The Navy Minister said: "To tell you the truth, it was more than I expected. I had no intention of seeing General UGAKI for I just dropped in to pay a courtesy call by way of inquiry after his health upon my return to Japan

Rousseau Saionji

but the Army Minister asked to see me. When I entered the sick-room, the General said: 'Many many thanks for your trouble,' and grasped my hands.

"According to information received from a certain source, someone is planning a meeting of the Supreme War Councillors of the Army and Navy and the Board of Marshals and Fleet Admirals, and as I felt this would be a very impractical thing, I was thinking of mentioning it to the Army Minister but he remarked: 'Military reduction is for the Navy and does not concern the Army. Therefore a combined conference of the Army and Navy is unnecessary. The Navy should hold a conference by itself; I am absolutely opposed to the combined conference.'"

With this, the Navy Minister told me the circumstances of the meeting (with the Army Minister).

In the first place, since this conference cannot be held without the concurrence of both the Army and Navy Ministers, the Navy Minister was greatly encouraged by what the Army Minister said and remarked: "I am very much relieved." Then the Navy Minister stated: "On the 10th, it is my intention to replace the Vice-Chief of the Naval General Staff and the Vice-Minister (Navy). I am also requesting several people to resign and am carrying out personnel transfers that should have been handled during my absence.

"In connection with the ousting of Vice-Chief of the Naval General Staff SUETSUGU, it was necessary for me to obtain the consent of the Chief of the Naval General Staff, so I talked to him. At first, the Chief of the Naval General Staff objected considerably and placed me in an awkward position but I explained: 'The Navy should handle

Rousseauan Saionji

its personnel according to its independent views before anyone instigates such action. If the Navy proceeds to take action after the political parties begin to clamor, it will look as though it was done by compulsion and it will affect the Navy's prestige. Therefore, what the Navy is justified in doing should be accomplished before such a thing occurs.' It seemed that the Chief of the Naval General Staff felt that action was unavoidable therefore, remarked, 'Well then, it is all right.'

"As a result, it was finally decided to dismiss SUETSUGU. On the whole, everything is progressing satisfactorily. This morning I (Navy Minister) proceeded to the palace and reported to His Majesty in private on the personnel changes to take place on the 10th. As I felt that it would be harmful to have people say all sorts of things that were not true, and that if I bungled matters I could become the bait of low-class, energetic and ambitious politicians, I decided, first of all, on these personnel changes. Eventually the Chief of the Naval General Staff may have to be replaced, but for the time being, I intend to observe matters as they are."

After conversing on various topics, I left the official residence of the Navy Minister about 5 o'clock and looked in at a rugby game that I had agreed to see with friends. Nevertheless I could not help but be incessantly apprehensive over General UGAKI's (possible resignation) and as I had other matters to discuss with the Prince, I made up my mind and left for Okitsu that same evening. I arrived in Okitsu a little after 12 o'clock and early the following morning, at 8 o'clock,

Rousseauan Saionji

I went to the Prince's residence and told him: "It seems that General UGAKI feels that he is causing much inconvenience for the Ministry of War as well as for the Cabinet due to his long leave of absence, therefore he has intentions of resigning. HIZOUCUCHI said this and that and KONOYE has also talked to me about the matter. In any case, the action to be taken by the War Minister is expected to cause a great stir and the Prime Minister himself, has remarked: 'I Shall be greatly inconvenienced if he should resign now. I would like very much to have it prevented. Can something be done about it?' It seems that the Army Minister had planned to resign suddenly without telling anyone."

I discussed the foregoing for an hour in minute detail with the Prince. The Prince said: "Go back to Tokyo immediately and deliver the following message to the Minister of War: 'I deeply sympathize with you in regard to your illness but I would like very much to have you by all means, give up the idea of resigning from your post. The resignation of a Minister is a vital matter. Your duty to your country at this time is especially important, therefore I earnestly beg of you to relinquish the idea of resigning. I should go and see you personally to make this request but as I have just recovered from my illness and cannot do so, I am asking HARADA to convey my message. The foregoing is SAIONJI's request to you in behalf of my country.'"

The Prince also requested: "Before you deliver the message to the Minister of War, I would like to have you meet with the Prince Minister and ask him if he has anything to add to my message."

Rousseauan Saionji

I left immediately on the 9:30 train and arrived in Tokyo at 2 o'clock. Soon after my arrival I called Premier HAMAGUCHI at Kamakura by phone and as a result decided, for the sake of formality, to have the interchange take place just between Prince SAIONJI and War Minister UGAKI, without the knowledge of even Premier HAMAGUCHI himself. I also ascertained that the Premier had nothing to add to the above message of Prince SAIONJI.

That evening I called on the War Minister at the Hospital and when I delivered Prince SAIONJI's message, the War Minister, with a very perplexed look, said: "Yes I felt that if I should mention the fact that I had intentions of resigning, I would be dissuaded, therefore I was determined to resign suddenly, with no word to anyone. As for the War Ministry, I feel sorry for them with me confined and helpless as a mute. I am also causing much inconvenience to the Cabinet. Therefore, I would like to resign at an opportune moment. I have been thinking that the Naval Disarmament issue would settle down somewhat eventually."

Thereupon I said: "Whether or not Your Excellency resigns is a serious decision today. If this matter is handled unskillfully, it will be very much to your disadvantage. You may well remember the case of IKEDA, Nagayasu..."

To this, General UGAKI remarked: "I shall leave it to the Prince's best judgment. Please tell him that UGAKI did not say anything but seemed to be in deep thought. Anyway, as what you told me is advice from the Prince himself, I shall give it careful consideration. The situation is somewhat difficult from the standpoint

Rousseauan Saionji

of my work, but maybe it can be arranged to appoint an acting Minister who shall be a Minister of State from the business point of view, and to have him attend even the Cabinet meetings. At any rate, keep this matter a complete secret even from Premier HAMAGUCHI."

At these words I parted with General UGAKI, but I could not very well keep this matter from the Premier, therefore I called up HAMAGUCHI at Kamakura via phone and gave him a general outline of the above conversation. However, I cautioned the Premier saying: "I would like to keep this story a complete secret. Don't mention anything to the Cabinet members and keep the details to yourself." I also wrote a detailed letter to Okitsu and sent it by registered mail.

On the morning of June 10, I met with Vice-Minister YOSHIDA at the Foreign Ministry, and he said: "This is just between you and me but I had a phone call this morning from MORI, the Chief Secretary of the Seiyukai to this effect: 'It is said that KATO, the Chief of the Naval General Staff, is going to make a direct appeal to the Throne this morning. Do you know about it?' As I did not, I answered: 'I do now know.'"

The 10th was the day the transfer of the Navy Vice-Minister and the Vice-Chief of the Naval General Staff was to be announced. KOBAYASHI, Chief of the Naval Construction Bureau, was appointed Vice-Minister of the Navy, and Vice-Admiral NAGANO was appointed the new Vice-Chief of the Naval General Staff. Vice-Minister YAMENASHI, and SUETSUGU, Vice-Chief of the Naval General Staff will be ordered to serve in the Navy Ministry. Vice-Admiral FUJITA was appointed as the Navy Minister.

Rousseauan Saionji

of the Naval Construction Bureau, and the successor to Vice-Admiral FUJITA as Chief of the Educational Bureau was Rear Admiral TERASHIMA.

Upon this, I called Vice-Admiral KOBAYASHI via phone from the Foreign Ministry and inquired: "Do you know anything about Chief of the Naval General Staff KITO's direct appeal to the Throne this morning?" To this, he replied, "I do not know anything about it. I am straightening up my office."

Then I recalled that the Chief Secretary of the Privy Council once intimated to news reporters: "KITO, Chief of the Naval General Staff will, in the near future make an individual report to the Throne." It was my intention to call up some people I knew at the Imperial Household Ministry and make inquiries but, at any rate, I decided to meet with the Premier and find out from him the details of the situation.

The Premier stated: "Well, to tell you the truth, I understand that the Chief of the Naval General Staff did make some sort of a report to the Throne at 11 o'clock this morning. I have also been informed that after KITO, Chief of the Naval General Staff returned from his audience with His Majesty, he called at the Navy Minister's office and asked for an interview."

I planned to see the Grand Chamberlain about 2 o'clock that afternoon but as he requested that: 'I come after two or three hours,' I called on him about 4 o'clock. The Grand Chamberlain remarked: "This morning, he (KITO) reported to the Throne. It is a distressing situation. Please get the details from the Navy Minister rather than from me."

Rousseauan Saionji

As I was conversing with Chamberlain HONDA of the Board of Chamberlains the telephone rang repeatedly. I thought of answering it but as I did not know who was calling I refrained from doing so. In the meantime, HONDA answered. The call was from the Emperor and I recognized his voice very distinctly. His Majesty said: "The Navy Minister is coming to the palace at 4:30 and I intend to see him." Fifteen minutes later, the same telephone rang. It was His Majesty, the Emperor calling again saying: "I (His Majesty) have something to hand the Navy Minister, so please remember it."

I wondered what it was all about, but later, at 4:30, the Navy Minister proceeded to the Palace. I left just about that time and awaited the return of the Navy Minister at his official residence. About 5:30, the Navy Minister returned to his official residence and remarked: "The most distressing thing about it all is that KATO approached His Majesty directly and begged to be relieved of his post. His reasons were, for the most part, denunciatory against the Government. His Majesty listened quietly to what KATO had to say but did not make any comments. As a result it seems that the Chief of the Naval General Staff was quite embarrassed. Therefore, after his report to the Throne at 11 o'clock, KATO immediately asked to see me and said: 'I just came from reporting to the Throne but His Majesty did not say a word. What shall I do now?'

"I promised to think it over and at the same time inquired of KATO why he made such a report to the Throne. All of this happened in the morning. His Majesty said

Rousseauan Saionji

to me: 'KATO brought this over and said thus and so but what he said does not make sense. As to KATO's resignation, I shall leave the matter entirely up to you and I'll return this to you.' Thereupon, I answered immediately: 'Very well, Sir,' and accepted what His Majesty offered. Again, I spoke saying: 'I am thinking of dismissing KATO as Chief of the Naval General Staff and of appointing Admiral TANIGUCHI, Commander-in-Chief of the Kure Naval Station, as his successor.' With these words, I took my leave from the presence of His Majesty." The Navy Minister was saying: "I intend to carry this out immediately."

That evening I called at the residence of Admiral OKADA and re remarked: "Truly, it is an embarrassing situation. He (KATO) took the matter to the most impolitic place. It is very probably that he was inticed by someone and that it was not his true intentions. At any rate, it is an awkward situation."

Even if the result is not too satisfactory, it can be said that the matter has been more or less settled.

For some time Admiral OKADA had been, for Admiral KATO's as well as for the Navy's sake, endeavoring to settle matters as amicably as possible, therefore it is very regrettable that Chief of the Naval General Staff KATO's attitude should have come to this.

I planned to leave for Okitsu that night but Admiral OKADA asked: "Wouldn't it be better to wait another day." I decided to wait a day and leave for Okitsu the following evening.

The following day I called on Vice-Admiral

Rousseauan Saionji

NOMURA and discussed various matters in connection with the Navy. Then at 11:30, I called on MAKINO, Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal and he remarked: "It is really an embarrassing situation, but with this action the affairs of the Navy have been somewhat straightened out. We should, so to speak, work behind the scene and not appear in sight. It is wiser not to tell the public that His Majesty was pleased to question me. After conversing on various topics, I returned home around noon.

In the afternoon I called on the Navy Minister at the Navy Ministry and he said: "As a matter of fact, I called in the Chief of the Naval General Staff and gravely announced my decision. Yesterday, His Majesty stated: 'I shall leave the matter regarding the replacement of the Chief of the Naval General Staff to your discretion.' Therefore, I immediately replied: 'I intend to transfer KATO to the position of a war councillor and to make Admiral TANIGUCHI his successor; therefore I hope this meets with your approval.' Late last night I was informed by the Chief Aide-de-Camp to His Majesty: 'That His Majesty approved of the Navy Minister's report to the Throne.' Saying: 'Immediate steps will be taken to that effect,' I notified the Chief of the Naval General Staff and he said: 'I am overwhelmed with gratitude at the magnanimous action taken in my behalf in spite of the fact that I took steps beyond the jurisdiction of the Navy Minister. Henceforth, no matter where I am transferred, I shall never act against the regulations of the Navy or cause any inconvenience to the Minister (Navy).'"

"With Admiral TANIGUCHI selected as successor to the

Rousseauan Saionji

Chief of the Naval Staff and Vice-Admiral NOMURA filling the vacancy left by Admiral TANIGUCHI of Kure, the disposition was concluded. This brings the matter to a conclusion for the present," said the Navy Minister. He also said to me: "Tell the Prince to set his mind at ease."

I met the Premier again and left that evening for Okitsu. The following morning, I made a detailed report to Prince SAIONJI. The Prince commented: "It was absolutely unavoidable. Nevertheless it is a good thing that Navy affairs at least are now more or less settled. In regard to the report to the Throne made by the Chief of the Naval General Staff, I think that the Seiyukai knew of the matter from the very beginning, for the Chief Secretary of the Privy Council was speaking of it earlier. Therefore I personally think that there is a logical connection." Then, although I had already written the Prince about General UGAKI's case, I again reported the matter in detail.

The evening papers of the night before carried a detailed story of the War Minister's resignation due to illness, and I commented that the news reporters who covered the War Ministry must have heard about it but the Prince retorted: "The fact that such is being published indiscriminately is an actual proof of laxity in administrative discipline. It is definitely disgraceful."

In the course of our discussion on various subjects, I mentioned to the Prince that on the night of the 6th, when KONOYE, OKUBO, KIDO and I were invited to dinner by the Vice-Minister of the Imperial House-

Rousseauan Saionji

hold, there was discussion pertaining to military disarmament, and at that time the Vice-Minister of the Imperial Household remarked: "Really, to have our national defense whittled off excessively by treaties..." At that time, I thought to myself, "Well, he is saying something which sounds suspicious and therefore I said aloud: "It seems to me, there are many who are of that opinion."

When I mentioned the foregoing to the Prince, he said: "That is a big mistake. At least, I myself believe that since nations are based today on the spirit of the promotion of peace and happiness of humanity, which is a new principle evolved at the Peace Conference of Paris, there is no nation which would establish facilities for attack. In short, they speak of military preparation for defence, but there is no one anywhere in this world who speaks of military preparation for aggression."

"This looks like a new principle, but if we go back a little further, we find that it has a splendid history behind it. This is what Jean Jacques Rousseau advocated a long time ago. Men are not beasts, therefore they should discontinue grappling with each other. For the happiness of mankind let us preserve peace; that is the spirit that has emerged as a new principle from the recent peace conference. Both the Military Disarmament Treaty and the Anti-war Pact are treaties that have a splendid historical background, therefore the spirit of menacing or reducing a country's military preparation by treaties does not exist at all. Rather than the foregoing, they should be considered as something undertaken for the sake of mankind's happiness,

Rousseauan Saionji

derived from the spirit of love for peace."

The Prince further told me: "Please convey to the Navy Minister and the Premier that it is splendid that the Navy issue has been settled. My respects to both for their untiring efforts." As for the publicity pertaining to UGAKI, the Prince also thought that it might be due to the activities of the HIRANUMA faction.

Upon my return to (Tokyo), I immediately delivered Prince SAIONJI's message to the Premier and the Navy Minister. About 11:00 A.M. on the 14th, when I was over at Prince KONOYE's, the Army Ministry called me by phone to say that the Parliamentary Vice-Minister, HIZOGUCHI, wanted to speak with me. I answered the phone and the message was: "The Minister of War has some business to discuss with you; therefore please come to the hospital at 5 o'clock today."

When I went to the official residence of the Premier about 3:30 P.M. the Premier stated: "The Chief Secretary was called by the Minister of War at 1 o'clock today and was told: 'First of all, I have no excuse to give the Government for the fact that I am sick in bed and not able to work at a time like this when affairs of state are so pressing. Secondly, I regret very much the fact that I am not able to attend Cabinet meetings and in a situation like that of a deaf person, unable to execute my functions for the Army. Even from the standpoint of work it is very inconvenient. Thirdly, I do not know what excuse to make to the Cabinet. Therefore I feel that, since the upheaval of the Navy in connection with military disarmament has been settled, and, since in

Rousseauan Saionji

view of my illness, I shall still require three or four months of absolute rest, I would like to resign at this time and to recommend someone who would be suitable as Minister of War.'

"As it would be very inconvenient to have UGAKI resign now, it was my intention to have him abandon the idea even if it would be necessary to appoint an acting minister. Therefore when the Chief Secretary went to keep his appointment with (UGAKI), I forewarned him not to accept any letters of resignation. As a result, the Chief Secretary answered: 'I shall so report.' and returned home. I (Premier) am very anxious to have him (UGAKI) remain in office. And since Railway Minister EGI is on friendly terms with UGAKI, I intend to have him go over and coax him to remain. Just before he (Railway Minister) left a short while ago he said: 'I would like very much to have HARADA refrain from going to see UGAKI until I return.'"

As a result, I was obliged to wait about an hour and a half at the Premier's residence. Due to the fact that quite a number of news reporters followed the Railway Minister to Admiral UGAKI's place, I let it be known that I might be an hour late, and after requesting the Premier to notify me upon the Railway Minister's return, I went home.

At 5 o'clock, I was notified by the Premier (of the Railway Minister's return) and when I went over to his place, the Railway Minister was there and he said: "If you are going to UGAKI's place, I would like to have you make every effort to have him remain in office. As a matter of fact, when I met UGAKI I told him that 'I

Rousseauan Saionji

had prevented you from coming to see him.' I said also: 'It will be very embarrassing to have your decision conveyed to Prince SAIONJI. Well, take it easy the next three or four months and recuperate. It isn't necessary for you to resign now.' To this, UGAKI answered: 'Well then, shall I do that.' Anyway, try somehow to keep him from resigning," said the Railway Minister.

Thereupon, I immediately called on the Minister of War at the Army Hospital and he said: "Well, to be frank with you, since the Navy complications have ended and everything seems settled, I intend to take this opportunity and rest. It was my intention to resign due to the previously mentioned reasons but EGI came over as the Premier's representative and repeatedly begged me not to resign, therefore I called ABE to talk matters over, as I figured on trying to use an acting minister or a surrogate but ABE stated: 'In the long run, even if I take over, I shall have to consult you on various matters as long as you are here, therefore you won't be able to convalesce. And yet it is impossible for me to undertake everything by myself.' Just now, I (UGAKI) sent ABE over to the Premier's to decline once again but if the Premier still insists, there is nothing else I can do, therefore I shall appoint an acting minister and remain in office. What do you think of that?"

"I (HIRADA) think it is hardly necessary for you to go to the extent of having a quarrel and resigning through sheer stubbornness. Your Excellency's resignation at this time might, on the other hand, give people an opportunity to build up wild rumors beyond your anticipation. This of course will be to your disadvantage."

Rousseauan Saionji

It won't be too late for you to definitely resign when your health cannot really withstand the duties and you feel that it is injurious to your health to continue. Anyway, try to continue in office as you are with an acting minister or a surrogate and recuperate as much as possible. That would be the most reasonable thing to do in all respects and one that is attended with little danger."

To this, the Army Minister said: "It will not be clever of me to say anything unwise and have people raise an issue over the matter. Neither should I cause anyone inconvenience, therefore I shall observe the situation for a while."

In short, the Army Minister requested: "That I wait a while for ABE's report on his return." I was made to wait until past 10 o'clock at the Army Hospital, but Vice-Minister ABE did not return, therefore the Minister of War said: "Won't you please come at 3 o'clock tomorrow morning? Then I can give you a definite answer. Upon this, I would like to have you take a message to Okitsu."

Therefore, I returned home immediately. Shortly afterwards, the Railway Minister called by phone. "How was it?", I inquired. And the reply was: "I am 70% certain that he will remain in office. He seems to understand very well what everyone has been saying."

Then I called the Premier by phone late that night to inquire about the latest developments and he said: "During my talk with the Vice-Minister of War, he said: 'Since MIZOGUCHI is now at the hospital, let's have him convey your thoughts to him (War Minister).' My opinions were conveyed to the War Minister and he said: 'There

Rousseauan Saionji

is no other course but to appoint an acting minister.

I am leaving everything up to the Prime Minister.'

With this, the affair was settled and everything brought to a close."

I called on the Minister of War at the Hospital the following morning at 8 o'clock, and he said: "Thank you very much for the courteous advice of the Prince of a few days ago. I have no words to apologize to His Majesty for my long idleness due to sickness in spite of pressure of government business. As for resigning, I, from the very beginning assumed a cautious attitude. Since the Naval Disarmament issue as well as the confusion within the Navy were settled, I want to recuperate, therefore earnestly requested to be relieved. But even the Premier has repeatedly stated: 'We shall make arrangements for you to rest, therefore do not resign.' I (War Minister) also felt that if I insisted it might result in dispute which would be quite contrary to my first aim, therefore I decided to leave everything in the hands of the Prime Minister and to continue in office. In any case I am very much humiliated over the short period of public excitement which I caused. In any case, I shall give you (Prince SAIONJI) the minute details when I make a personal call on you."

In short, through some sort of arrangement, it has been determined that Vice-Minister ABE will look after state affairs and the War Minister himself will recuperate for the present.

I left for Shizuoka on the express and then went around to Okitsu and gave the Prince the foregoing story. The Prince was very much delighted and remarked:

Rousseauan Saionji

"Well, I am relieved to hear that. At all events, it is not proper to have the War Minister resign at present. It is wonderful that things have been settled thus. To the Minister of War, UGAKI, please extend this personal message immediately upon your return to Tokyo:

"SAIONJI was very much relieved when he heard that you were going to remain in office. As a matter of fact, there has never been another time when he has stepped in as he has this time and requested anyone to continue in office. As to my motives in having you continue in office, I shall discuss them with you as soon as I recover from my illness and am able to go out. But if you should recover before me, and could come and see me, let us discuss it at length then. At any rate, it is splendid to have you continue in office and I am very thankful. Please convalesce fully and I pray that you will recover completely even a day soon."

I returned to Tokyo on the express the same afternoon and called on the War Minister at the Army Hospital at 8:30 the same evening and conveyed (SAIONJI's) message.

The War Minister rejoiced greatly at this and said: "I regret very much to have caused so much worry to the elderly gentleman."

That day's edition of the newspapers seemed to contain various adverse criticisms and attacks each according to its fancy. However, on the whole, as the action did not violate any rules or regulations, and since there was a fairly large group who must have felt that to cause a commotion in the public mind might, on the contrary, be inconvenient, public opinion was

Rousseauan Saionji

comparatively quiet. However, from the general situation at this time, I was aware that the basis for the Army Minister's resolution to resign was 70% health and 30% officiousness on the part of various people.

On the morning of the 16th, I called on the Premier and briefly spoke of the message of the day before that the Prince entrusted to my care, and when I inquired about the appointment of an acting Minister of War, he replied: "According to law, there is nothing illegal about the matter. But as this is a rare case, I do not know what the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal's views are on the matter. There is no past example of a minister of state who has an official of Chokumin rank."

Saying this, the Premier seemed quite concerned. Therefore I remarked: "The Chief Secretary has informed me that the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal is at Kamakura at present and it appears as though he will return to Tokyo about the 17th." To this, the Premier replied: "That makes it very inconvenient for us. I have been granted an audience with His Majesty the Emperor at 2 o'clock today and will report to the Throne at that time. But before I do this I'll have to obtain the consent of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal. If he is in Kamakura, I hate to trouble you but shall I have you go over and, for formality's sake present the gist of the coming report to the Throne that I am making?"

To make doubly sure, I called up the official residence of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal at Takanawa by phone and was informed that he was in Tokyo and "at the Palace" at the moment. Therefore I immediately proceeded to the palace and met with the Lord Keeper of

Rousseauan Saionji

the Privy Seal and spoke to him of the circumstances which led to the change of the War Minister's intention to resign. I told him that I wanted him to bear in mind the points I brought out. At that time, he seemed somewhat hesitant about the issue from the legislative standpoint. As the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal did not know anything about law, I felt that this was inevitable.

Then I went to the office of OKABE, of the Board of Ceremonies, and found him sitting listlessly, therefore I said: "Did you know that the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, the Grand Chamberlain, and the Imperial Household Minister are in the office of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal and are seriously discussing the Army problem. As you are quite familiar with law, why don't you go over and explain?" OKABE was very much surprised at this, and hurried to the office of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal.

To the Imperial Household Minister, I explained in detail the circumstances of the negotiations between the Prince and UGAKI, the War Minister, and said: "If, as a legal matter, it does not conflict with the laws and regulations, it is unwise under the general circumstances to hesitate and waver because there is no precedent and because it is an exceptional case. Moreover, I also mentioned the fact that the Prince was saying: "They always speak of precedent, etc., as though it is vital from the standpoint of the functioning of the Government. Are not all unprecedented as well as new cases unavoidable if they do not conflict with the laws and regulations? It is not good to adhere to precedent and delay the functions of the Government."

Rousseauan Saionji

I returned home after having made the Imperial Household Minister thoroughly understand the foregoing. In the afternoon I went to the official residence of the Premier and spoke to him about it. As OKABE seemed to have some business with me, I went to the Imperial Household Ministry about 3 o'clock and called at OKABE's office and he remarked: "Everything had ended without mishap for the time being. I meant to talk to you about it."

Then I went to attend Davidson's funeral service and met with Vice-Navy Minister KOBAYASHI and he said: "I have something I'd like to discuss with you so won't you come over." So I dropped in at the Navy Ministry on my way home and, according to (KOBAYASHI): "The military operations Chief, KATO, Takayoshi of the Naval General Staff may have to resign. I would like to have new plans for national defense set up and have them ready to be referred to the Privy Council for deliberation."

He (The Navy Vice-Minister) also discussed the recent Army issue at length but I spoke very little on the matter and returned home. Then I informed the Prince that I delivered the message without fail to the Minister of War, and that the Privy Council circle is clamoring, using such arguments as: "The Minister of War is behaving improperly. It is an unpardonable act toward His Majesty to remain in office in spite of the fact that he cannot conduct his duties from his sick bed."